



Panorama Tips & Tricks #12 Outbreak Definitions



Cluster/Disease Cluster – “aggregations of relatively uncommon events or diseases in space and/or time in amounts that are believed or perceived to be greater than could be expected by chance. (Porta, 2008)

Outbreak – “A disease outbreak is the occurrence of disease cases in excess of normal expectancy. The number of cases varies according to the disease-causing agent, and the size and type of previous and existing exposure to the agent.” (WHO)

All outbreaks start as clusters of disease. They are not confirmed as outbreaks until an epi link between the diseases/persons affected is established. [Public Health Nurses should consult with their MOH on determining the proper classification of their outbreak/cluster investigation.](#)