MHA – RELEVANT MEDICAL CASE 2026

Protocol Activation for Suspected High-Impact Infectious Disease Aboard an International Vessel

1. CASE DESCRIPTION

MHA intervened in a high-complexity epidemiological situation originating aboard an international vessel moored at a port terminal in San Lorenzo, Santa Fe. A crew member presented with fever accompanied by extensive skin lesions, neuropathic pain, vomiting and intolerance to oral intake. The presentation initially raised concern for a high-impact communicable disease, including the possibility of Ebola virus disease.

2. EVALUATION & REFERRAL

In response to the clinical and epidemiological situation, specialized medical assessment was performed, the applicable health protocols were activated, and medical transport was coordinated from the vessel to a high-complexity healthcare facility in Rosario. Infectious-disease evaluation established extensive Varicella-Zoster Virus infection (Herpes Zoster) as the presumptive diagnosis. Testing also identified reactive/positive HIV serology, representing a newly detected diagnosis.

3. CLINICAL COURSE & COMPLEXITY

Because of the immunocompromised context, extensive lesions and deterioration in general condition, prolonged hospitalization and multidisciplinary management were required. During the clinical course, the crew member developed motor and sensory impairment affecting both lower limbs, with flaccid paraparesis and areflexia. A perianal abscess subsequently developed and required surgical drainage. Hospitalization lasted approximately 22 days, including a period in intensive care followed by a general ward. Treatment included intravenous ampicillin/sulbactam, antiviral therapy and antiretroviral therapy for HIV. Blood and urine cultures were negative at the time of follow-up.

4. MHA INTERVENTION

- Initial medical assessment and coordination.
- Coordination with treating medical teams and specialists.
- Coordination of medical transport from the vessel.
- Coordination and follow-up of hospital admission.
- Monitoring of clinical progress and complications.
- Assessment of medical requirements for international transport.
- Coordination of discharge and repatriation to the crew member's country of origin.

5. CASE RESOLUTION

Following clinical stabilization and medical assessment, the crew member was determined to be fit for transfer to the country of origin. MHA coordinated discharge and subsequent international repatriation while maintaining medical instructions and continuity of treatment.

6. RELEVANCE FOR MHA

This case demonstrates MHA's ability to provide integrated support in complex maritime medical situations, combining emergency assistance, health coordination, hospital referral, medical follow-up, multidisciplinary communication and international repatriation. The key differentiator is continuity of management—from the initial response to a potentially significant epidemiological situation, through high-complexity hospital care, stabilization

and eventual repatriation.

Editorial note: This English version has been prepared as an institutional case-study document. Patient-identifying information has been removed or generalized.