

Dear Rotarians,

I have been receiving a lot of questions about the Polio case in New York and I thought you might like an update on the situation. Here is my take on what is happening and what you can do. Let me know if you have any additional questions. Best wishes, Terry Ziegler

Polio Returns to the United States! - You may have read a headline something like this in your local or national news source. And you may have wondered - is this real and if so, what's being done about it? After all, Global Polio Eradication is still Rotary's # 1 Priority - isn't it? First, let me thank all of you for the amazing work you have already done to bring us that much closer to our goal of a Polio-Free world. We have already saved over 20,000,000 children from being paralyzed by Polio! We have reduced the yearly number of the Polio paralyzed by over 99.9% since 1988 and Rotarians have donated over \$2 Billion to this effort. But we have not yet reached our goal.

Yes, this case is very real and serious. The U.S. was declared polio free in 1979 and a case had not originated in the country since then, but travelers have occasionally brought the virus into the U.S. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) was informed of a case of paralytic Polio in an unvaccinated individual in Rockland County, NY in July, 2022 and since that time, Poliovirus has been detected in the sewage water in Rockland County and in other areas in and around New York City. The CDC has confirmed that the Poliovirus causing the paralysis in the individual and in the environmental samples is Type 2 Vaccine Derived Polio Virus - not the Wild Polio Virus. That means the source of the Poliovirus had to be the live virus, Sabin-like Oral Polio Vaccine given in a country outside of the US, as the injected Polio vaccine given in the US is a killed virus vaccine which is not capable of mutating to a live-infectious form. The Vaccine Derived Polio Virus can spread and cause paralysis and death just like the Wild Polio Types. Additional unvaccinated, infectious individuals could be carrying the virus as most Polio positive cases show mild or no symptoms.

What is being done about it? Investigations are underway to determine the extent of the spread of the virus and the potential risk associated with the environmental samples. Residents in the areas near the Polio positive samples (and everywhere else!) are being advised to make sure that they and their children are vaccinated for Polio. And finally, environmental surveillance for the Poliovirus is being strengthened in order to rapidly detect any new virus importation.

What can you as a Rotarian do? This is a wake-up call to the unvaccinated. Encourage your family and your friends to be vaccinated for Polio. The individual in New York would not be paralyzed if they had been vaccinated. Childhood Polio vaccinations last a lifetime. You can also remind your friends and associates of the great work Rotary has done to get us to this point of nearly eradicating this terrible disease and the work left to reach our goal (with only two remaining Polio endemic countries - Afghanistan and Pakistan). And finally, responding to outbreaks is costly so please DONATE to The Rotary Foundation's PolioPlus Fund. You can do so at [Rotary.org/myrotary](https://rotary.org/myrotary) or [Rotary.org/donate](https://rotary.org/donate). With the continuing Gates Foundation \$2 to \$1 match on all Rotary related Polio eradication donations, this time of year, as we approach World Polio Day, is a great time to encourage your club members and friends to donate to Rotary's # 1 priority - Global Polio Eradication!

World Polio Day! October 24, 2022

The Final Two Polio Endemic Countries:

Pakistan. Fourteen Wild Polio cases reported in 2022. One Wild Polio Case reported in 2021. The most recent case had an onset of paralysis on 7/01/22. Seven **WPV1** Positive Environmental Samples were reported this week in Pakistan.

Afghanistan One Wild Polio Case reported in 2022. Four Wild Polio cases reported in 2021 The most recent case had an onset of paralysis on 1/11/22. Afghanistan reported 56 Wild Polio cases in 2020. One WPV1 Positive Environmental Sample was reported this week in Afghanistan.

Our Goal is Global Polio Eradication!!

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