Jan. 31 (UPI) -- Health officials in Britain and Sweden confirmed their first cases of coronavirus as the worldwide number of cases rose above 10,000 Friday.

Britain's Department of Health and Social Care said it transferred the two patients to a specialist infection unit in Newcastle. The two individuals are members of the same family.

"The patients are receiving specialist [National Health Service] care, and we are using tried and tested infection control procedures to prevent further spread of the virus," Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty said.
Meanwhile a flight of British nationals arrived in Britain on Friday from Wuhan. The department said the passengers were being taken to a National Health Service site for a 14-day quarantine.

Sweden also confirmed its first case Friday, in Jönköping County. Sweden's Public Health Authority said the woman recently visited the Wuhan area and returned to Sweden on Jan. 24.

The agency said she initially had no symptoms but later developed a cough and visited a hospital. Officials there quarantined her in an infection clinic.

The number of confirmed coronavirus cases climbed on Friday to nearly 9,800 worldwide as the daily death toll in China hit a record 43 -- bringing the total to 213 since the outbreak began last month.

Chinese health officials said 42 of the deaths occurred in Hubei province and 30 were reported in its capital of Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak and home to the now-closed seafood and animal market the virus is believed to have emerged from.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying announced Friday the government chartered two airplanes to pick up Chinese tourists stranded abroad as airlines cancel flights to Wuhan or deny residents of the coronavirus-stricken city to board planes.

"In view of the practical difficulties recently encountered by Chinese citizens from Hubei, especially Wuhan, overseas, the Chinese government has decided to send civil charter flight to take them directly back to Wuhan as soon as possible," she said in a statement.
China's Civil Aviation Administration said it will dispatch two planes Friday to retrieve Hubei residents from Bangkok and Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia.

Twenty-two countries have reported at least one confirmed case of the coronavirus, dubbed 2019-nCoV, prompting governments to either restrict access or close off borders to Chinese citizens.

On Friday, a day after the Philippines reported its first patient, President Rodrigo Duterte barred admitting Chinese nationals from Hubei province.

"It will last until the threat is over, given that the safety of our countrymen is foremost in the president’s mind," spokesman Salvador Panelo said in a statement.

The Philippines' first confirmed case was a Chinese woman who flew from Wuhan to Hong Kong before traveling through several Philippine cities, he said.

"The patient is being treated and isolated," he said. "There is no way that she will transmit the disease to another person as the hospital personnel are protectively dressed and their mouths and noses covered with surgical masks plus their hands covered with gloves."

The move follows Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin signing an order to close its far eastern border with China Friday, and its foreign ministry announced it had suspended electronic visas to Chinese nationals at checkpoints in the Far East, Kaliningrad Region and at air, sea, automobile and pedestrian checkpoints in St. Petersburg and the Leningrad region.

According to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, nations throughout Asia have restricted entry to Chinese nationals in an attempt to prevent the virus' spread.

Sri Lanka suspended visas on arrival from China while Malaysia and Singapore stopped issuing visas to those from Hubei. Meanwhile, Mongolia and North Korea have closed their borders with China.
New Zealand also announced its first suspected case of the disease Friday. Ministry of Health Director-General Dr. Ashley Bloomfield told reporters the patient arrived with symptoms in Auckland and was in isolation.

Thursday, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak an international public health emergency, and will mobilize researchers and clinicians to develop effective drug treatments and vaccines.

Social giant Facebook said it will work to support the WHO by limiting the spread of "misinformation and harmful content" about the coronavirus on its platforms. The company said it will remove content with false claims or conspiracy theories that have been flagged by authorities as harmful.

"This includes claims related to false cures or prevention methods -- like drinking bleach cures the coronavirus -- or claims that create confusion about health resources that are available." Facebook official Kang-Xing Jin said, adding that it will also block hashtags that spread false information.

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