

August 8, 2014

TO: Healthcare Providers, Hospitals, and Local Health Departments (LHDs)
FROM: NYSDOH Bureaus of Communicable Disease Control (BCDC) and Healthcare Associated Infections (BHAI)

HEALTH ADVISORY

EBOLA GUIDANCE DOCUMENT -- Evaluation of patients presenting to primary care, urgent care, or other outpatient settings with signs, symptoms, and travel history concerning for Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)

For healthcare facilities, please distribute to the Infection Control Department, Emergency Department, Infectious Disease Department, Director of Nursing, Medical Director, Director of Pharmacy, Laboratory Service, and all patient care areas.

Summary

This advisory provides guidance for the evaluation and management of patients suspected to have EVD who present to outpatient facilities.

Background

Several outbreaks of Ebola virus disease (EVD) are occurring in parts of West Africa (Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Nigeria). On August 1, 2014, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a health advisory with guidelines for the evaluation of patients presenting to a health care setting and suspected of having Ebola virus disease (EVD) (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00364.asp>) which NYSDOH retransmitted on August 2, 2014.

EVD Symptoms and Risk Factors

- 1) Clinical criteria, including
 - Fever > 38.6°C or 101.5° F, AND
 - additional symptoms such as severe headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, or unexplained hemorrhage, AND
- 2) Epidemiologic risk factors within the past 3 weeks before the onset of symptoms, such as
 - contact with blood or other body fluids of a patient known to have or suspected to have EVD
 - residence in—or travel to—an area where EVD transmission is active
 - direct handling of bats, rodents, or primates from disease-endemic areas

Currently involved countries are Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Nigeria. Check the CDC travel notification website for the most up-to-date information: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A PATIENT WITH SUSPECTED EVD

- 1) For any ill patient who presents with fever and additional symptoms and who reports recent travel (3 weeks prior to onset of symptoms) to an area with ongoing EVD transmission as mentioned above:
 - Screen upon presentation and immediately place patient in a private room with a closed door
 - Provide the patient with a surgical mask and demonstrate its proper use
 - Minimize the number of staff who interact with the patient and keep a list of these staff
 - Staff who interact with the patient should follow standard, droplet, and contact infection control precautions. EVD is NOT transmitted through the airborne route.
 - Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) should be worn upon entry to the patient's room to include gloves, gown (fluid resistant or impermeable), eye protection (goggles or face shield), and a facemask.
 - Additional protective equipment might be required in certain situations (e.g., copious amounts of blood, other body fluids, vomit, or feces present in the environment), including but not limited to double gloving, disposable shoe covers, and leg coverings.
 - More detailed information on these and other infection control issues including environmental cleaning and disinfection, applicable to both the inpatient and outpatient settings, is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/infection-prevention-and-control-recommendations.html>.
 - **Call the Local Health Department in which your facility is located for consultation** (contact information is at <http://goo.gl/wfRgjb>) to determine if further evaluation is needed
- 2) When you call the LHD, be prepared to:
 - Describe the patient's risk factors and travel history, including dates and locations of travel and any contact with sick patients, healthcare facilities, or animals in areas with ongoing EVD transmission
 - Describe the patient's presenting symptoms, signs, and duration of illness
- 3) When you call the LHD, you can expect to:
 - Discuss the case and possible recommendations for testing
 - Be provided consultation on the need to refer the patient to a hospital for further workup and testing
 - Receive assistance to arrange transport to another medical facility if needed
- 4) **Do NOT refer the patient to an Emergency Department, hospital, or other facility without consulting with the LHD.**
 - This includes situations in which you speak to the patient on the phone, but do not see him/her in person.
 - If the patient must be immediately referred to an Emergency Department, at a minimum please alert the ED and the LHD.
- 5) Providers who are unable to reach their LHD can contact the NYSDOH Bureau of Communicable Disease Control at 518-473-4439 during business hours or 1-866-881-2809 evenings, weekends and holidays.

Additional Information

The CDC's Ebola Website contains the most up-to-date information about the outbreak and has specific materials for healthcare workers, airline personnel, travelers, and the general public. It can be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>.