

# Ebola Preparedness and Response for Outpatient Health Care Providers

## Detecting Ebola and Reducing the Risk to Patients and Staff

*The largest ever Ebola outbreak is ongoing in the West African countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The recent Ebola case in Dallas and the experience of his being sent home from an ER two days before admission highlight the need for all health care providers to be ready to identify and assess a traveler from an Ebola-affected area who has signs/symptoms of the disease. Any delay in identifying a person with Ebola can result in additional exposures in the health care setting, at home, and in the community; thus, early identification is crucial. In addition, the illnesses among health care workers who cared for the patient in Dallas highlight the risk of transmission and the importance of preparedness and protection in health care settings.*

The purpose of this communication is to provide guidance to outpatient health care providers on how to prepare to safely and effectively identify, isolate and, if needed, transfer a patient who may have Ebola, while preventing exposures to patients and staff. We urge you to develop a plan, communicate the plan with all staff, and conduct occasional “walk through” exercises in your office/clinic to ensure that the plan can be effectively implemented. It is recommended that the plan include the following:

### *General preparedness*

- Ensure that your office/clinic has adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) for standard, contact and droplet precautions (facemasks<sup>1</sup>, eye protection [goggles or face shields], gloves, and fluid resistant or impermeable gowns).
- Consider your office/clinic layout and plan the best place to isolate a patient suspected to have Ebola; this should be a single room with a door and a nearby restroom that could be dedicated for the patient (alternately, bedpans could be available so the patient does not need to leave the room).
- Practice appropriate use of PPE including how to remove it without becoming contaminated. Available training resources on the use of PPE include: a [PowerPoint presentation](#), [poster](#), and [videos](#).
- Keep the phone number for Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) Acute Communicable Diseases Program (ACDC) available to report a suspected Ebola case 24/7 or ask questions - business hours 213-240-7941, after hours 213-974-1234. For suspected cases in Pasadena or Long Beach, call your local Health Department (see resource box).

### *Screening of patients for travel history and fever on arrival*

- Display [posters](#) in the waiting room and near the reception desk asking patients to tell reception or nursing staff immediately if they have a fever and, in the last 21 days, have traveled from an

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<sup>1</sup> N95 respirators are not required for protection against Ebola as airborne transmission does not occur. Some procedures may create small droplets of secretions, which could increase risk; in this situation, use of an N95 respirator or higher levels of protection is warranted. Offices may choose to stock N95 respirators as preparedness for other emerging infection threats (e.g., SARS, MERS).

Ebola-affected country in West Africa (currently Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone; check the CDC [website](#) for updates on the outbreak area).

- If the patient reports a history of travel to one of these Ebola-affected countries and fever or other symptoms consistent with Ebola (headache, joint and muscle aches, abdominal pain, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, rash, bleeding), consider the patient a suspected Ebola case and take action according to your plan.
- As a second layer of screening, the receptionist or clinical staff should ask all patients who report fever, or who have a documented fever, if they have travelled from an Ebola-affected country in the last 21 days.
- If a patient calls your office/clinic and reports having traveled from an Ebola-affected country in the last 21 days and has fever or other symptoms consistent with Ebola, ask the patient to remain in place and obtain their location and contact information; call ACDC; and follow guidance to have the patient transported to a hospital Emergency Department for evaluation.

#### *Isolation of a suspected Ebola case*

- Put the patient in a single room with the door closed.
- Limit the number of staff entering the room to the minimum that are needed for patient care. Put a sign-in sheet on the door to identify all staff entering the room for any reason.
- Post a notice on the door restricting entry of staff and indicating that PPE is needed for anyone who enters the room. LACDPH has created a combination [sign-in sheet/restricted entry notice](#).
- Ensure that all equipment and supplies that are in the room stay in the room and are not used with other patients; keep all materials, including disposing of used PPE, in the room so the hall is not potentially contaminated.

#### *Management of persons who accompanied the suspected Ebola case to the facility*

- Put accompanying persons in a single room separate from the suspected Ebola case until the evaluation of the suspected Ebola case is complete and LACDPH-ACDC has been consulted. If a single room is not available, separate the accompanying persons from others in the waiting area.

#### *Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*

- Ensure that anyone entering the patient's room use PPE appropriate for standard, contact and droplet precautions – facemask, eye protection (goggles or face shield), fluid resistant or impermeable gown and gloves.
- Ensure that PPE is removed without contaminating the wearer and that hand hygiene is performed immediately after removal of PPE.
- Post a [sign](#) on the patient's door reminding staff how to put on and take off PPE. Have another staff member observe when PPE is removed to ensure it is done safely.
- Encourage frequent hand hygiene by all staff, by the patient, and by persons who accompanied them to reduce potential risk of contamination or infection.

### *Evaluation of the patient*

- Take a detailed history of travel and identify potential exposures to ill people, or known or suspected Ebola patients in the outbreak country. Ask specifically about exposures in the outbreak country in health care facilities, at home, at funerals and in laboratories where specimens from Ebola patients were processed. Ask about the level of contact (percutaneous/mucous membrane exposure; direct contact to an Ebola patient/cadaver or exposure to bodily fluids without PPE; or known close contact (within 3 feet) with an Ebola patient).
- Take additional history and ask about symptoms, including those consistent with Ebola (e.g., headache, joint and muscle aches, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain, rash, bleeding) as well as for other potential diagnoses (e.g., use of malaria chemoprophylaxis).
- Do not draw blood or conduct a physical exam or medical procedures, unless absolutely needed for the patient's immediate care, until after consulting with LACDPH-ACDC.
- Contact LACDPH-ACDC, available 24/7 (see resource box). ACDC will advise on the management of the patient including, if indicated, diagnostic testing, initial management, transport and admission to hospital. If ACDC recommends that the patient be tested for Ebola, they will arrange for specimen collection and transport of the specimen to the LACDPH Public Health Laboratory and to CDC. The result will be available from the Public Health Laboratory in one day and you will be notified of the result by ACDC.

### *Disinfection and correct management of medical waste*

- Put used PPE and all medical waste in a leak-proof container; use a rigid waste receptacle designed to support a leak-proof bag to help minimize contamination of the bag's exterior (See CDC guidance on [waste management](#) and [environmental infection control](#)).
- Waste management and cleaning/disinfection of the room depend on the ultimate diagnosis of the patient (including laboratory testing for Ebola, if performed). Restrict entry into the room and do not remove the waste from the room or dispose of the waste or clean/disinfect the room until ACDC provides instruction on how to do so safely.

### *Identification of staff, patients and visitors who may have been exposed at your facility*

- Make a list of all staff, patients and visitors who were in the waiting room with the potential Ebola patient and obtain their contact information for any necessary follow-up.
- Save the sign-in sheet that was posted on the patient's door until the patient is cleared by ACDC.
- List other staff members present who may have been exposed, and include their contact information.

### *Staying up-to-date*

- Stay current on the [outbreak situation](#) in West Africa as the countries affected by Ebola may change.
- Sign up for alerts from the [Los Angeles Health Alert Network](#).

## Resources

<b>Print Materials</b>	
Waiting room poster/flyer English & Spanish (French to be added soon)	<a href="http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/docs/WaitRoom.pdf">http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/docs/WaitRoom.pdf</a>
Sign-in sheet for patient room	<a href="http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/docs/EbolaSignIn.pdf">http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/docs/EbolaSignIn.pdf</a>
FAQ Fact Sheet on Ebola for patients and the general public in plain English, Spanish & French	<a href="http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/docs/ebolaFAQ.pdf">http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/docs/ebolaFAQ.pdf</a> <a href="http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/docs/ebolaFAQSPN.pdf">http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/docs/ebolaFAQSPN.pdf</a> <a href="http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/docs/ebolaFAQ-FRN.pdf">http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/docs/ebolaFAQ-FRN.pdf</a>
<b>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Training</b>	
Poster - using PPE	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/ppe-poster.pdf">http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/ppe-poster.pdf</a>
Video - using PPE	<a href="http://www.drc-group.com/project/jitt-ppe.html">http://www.drc-group.com/project/jitt-ppe.html</a>
PowerPoint slide set and training guide – use of PPE	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/hai/prevent/ppe.html">http://www.cdc.gov/hai/prevent/ppe.html</a>
<b>Local Consultation and Guidance</b>	
LA County Department of Public Health	Acute Communicable Disease Program (ACDC) Business hours 213-240-7941 After hours/weekends/holidays 213-974-1234 <a href="http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/ebola.htm">http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/ebola.htm</a>
Long Beach Health and Human Services	562-570-4000
Pasadena Public Health Department	626-744-6043
General questions about Ebola for the general public	2-1-1
Los Angeles Health Alert Network	Sign up and see archived alerts at <a href="http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/LAHAN">www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/LAHAN</a>
<b>CDC Resources</b>	
Main Ebola website	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/">http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/</a>
Infection control guidelines	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/infection-prevention-and-control-recommendations.html">http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/infection-prevention-and-control-recommendations.html</a>
Environmental infection control guidelines	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/environmental-infection-control-in-hospitals.html">http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/environmental-infection-control-in-hospitals.html</a>
Ebola medical waste management	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/medical-waste-management.html">http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/medical-waste-management.html</a>
Ebola diagnosis and management	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/clinician-information-us-healthcare-settings.html">http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/clinician-information-us-healthcare-settings.html</a>
Ebola case definition	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/case-definition.html">http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/case-definition.html</a>
Countries affected by Ebola	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/index.html">http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/index.html</a>
Pronunciation Guide	Guinea: GIH-nee Sierra Leone: see-air-uh-lee-“OWN” Libera: ly-BEER-ee-uh



**If you  
traveled from**



**West Africa\***  
**in the last 21 days**  
**and**  
**have a fever,**



**tell the receptionist**  
**or nurse right away.**

**\*As of 10/14/14, travelers from Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia  
may be at risk of Ebola**

For more information dial 2-1-1 from any phone in LA County  
Or visit [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/ebola.htm](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/ebola.htm)

CDCP-ACDC-0051-01 (10/14/14)



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**  
**Public Health**



**Si usted viajó desde  
la región  
Occidental de África\*  
en los últimos 21 días y  
tiene fiebre,**



**Dígale a la recepcionista o  
la enfermera de inmediato**

\* A partir del 14 de octubre de 2014, las personas que viajaron de Guinea, Sierra Leona y Liberia pueden estar en riesgo de contraer Ébola

Para más información marque 2-1-1 desde cualquier teléfono en el Condado de los Ángeles  
O visite [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/ebola.htm](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/ebola.htm)

CDCP-ACDC-0051-02 (10/14/14)



CONDADO DE LOS ÁNGELES  
**Salud Pública**

# **Restricted Access**

## **Do not enter without wearing Personal Protective Equipment**

- **Everyone who enters the room, from when the patient arrives until the room is cleaned, must sign in.**
- **Save list until the patient is cleared by Public Health Department.**

**Date:**

**Print Name:**

**Contact #:**


**Continue on 2<sup>nd</sup> sheet if necessary**

