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Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) Preparation in New Hampshire: Update #5

Key Points and Recommendations:

1. Effective September 21, 2015, the United States will remove all enhanced screening and monitoring requirements for travelers from Liberia. This update follows a CDC determination that the risk of Ebola importation into the United States by travelers from Liberia is low and that Liberia has implemented effective control and exit screening measures.
2. The NH Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) will no longer routinely contact or monitor travelers from Liberia residing in New Hampshire.
3. Entry screening and monitoring activities will not change for travelers from Guinea or Sierra Leone or for any travelers from Liberia who have also traveled to either Guinea or Sierra Leone within the previous 21 days.
4. On August 27, 2015, the CDC updated their personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance for managing a suspect or confirmed EVD patient by adding detail and clarifying their recommendations. Healthcare providers should review this recently updated guidance.
5. All healthcare facilities and providers should continue to maintain vigilance in screening patients for travel from Sierra Leone and Guinea and promptly report any suspect EVD patient to the NH DHHS Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496 (after hours 603-271-5300) for consultation.

Background:

More than 28,000 cases of suspect, probable, and confirmed Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) have been reported since the beginning of the West African Ebola outbreak in December 2013, including more than 11,300 deaths. The majority of EVD cases have been in the three countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. Liberia was declared Ebola free on September 3, 2015, 42 days after the country's last confirmed EVD patient completed treatment and was confirmed as EVD-negative. Liberia has now entered a 90-day period of heightened surveillance, but the CDC has determined that the risk of importation of EVD to the U.S. from Liberia is low and Liberia has implemented effective control and exit screening measures. Therefore, effective September 21st, the U.S. will no longer perform screening and monitoring of travelers from Liberia, and the NH Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) will no longer contact or monitor travelers from Liberia.

The Ebola outbreak, however, continues in the West African countries of Guinea and Sierra Leone. During the last reported week, there were 5 new confirmed cases of EVD in Sierra Leone, while Guinea experienced its first week with zero new cases. In total, however, there are more than 1800 contacts currently under observation for development of EVD in these two countries. Weekly updates about the EVD outbreak can be found on the World Health Organization website at: <http://apps.who.int/ebola/ebola-situation-reports>.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

Healthcare Providers should note that the CDC recently updated their PPE guidance on August 27, 2015 to add detail and clarify the recommendations. Specifically the guidance was updated to:

- Expand the rationale for respiratory protection;
- Clarify that the trained observer should not serve as an assistant for doffing PPE;
- Suggest that a designated doffing assistant or “buddy” might be helpful, especially in doffing with the powered air purifying respirator (PAPR) option;
- Modify the PAPR doffing procedure to make the steps clearer;
- Change the order of boot cover removal. Boot covers should now be removed after the gown or coverall;
- Clarify the types of gowns and coveralls that are recommended and provide a link to considerations for gown and coverall selection; and
- Emphasize the importance of frequent cleaning of the floor and work surfaces in the doffing area.

For details on the CDC guidance on PPE, please see the CDC websites at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/healthcare-us/ppe/guidance.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/healthcare-us/ppe/guidance-clinically-stable-puis.html>

- ▶ For any questions regarding the contents of this message, please contact NH DHHS, DPHS, Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496 (after hours 1-800-852-3345 ext.5300).
- ▶ To change your contact information in the NH Health Alert Network, contact Thom Flynn at 603-271-4596 or email tdflynn@dhhs.state.nh.us

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Attachments: One

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