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Contact: Denise Stinson, RN (253) 798-7671

Communicable Disease Control

3629 South D Street, Tacoma, WA 98418

(253) 798-6410 (phone) • (253) 798-7666 (fax)

Evaluating Patients with Suspected Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) Guidance

Action Requested

- Consider Ebola virus disease (EVD) in the differential diagnosis of febrile illness with compatible symptoms in any person with travel history in the preceding 21 days to western Africa.
- Use contact, droplet and airborne precautions in the evaluation and management of such patients while diagnostic testing is pending.
- For asymptomatic returning travelers who have had a high-risk exposure (e.g., clinical, laboratory, or funeral exposure to an EVD case without use of personal protective equipment), monitor temperature daily until 21 days after the last exposure. If fever develops, place the patient in isolation as set forth above and contact the Health Department.
- Call Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department **immediately** at (253) 798-6410 and press “0” if you suspect a case of EVD.

Background

- The Ebola outbreak ongoing in western Africa is the first in this region of the African continent, is the largest Ebola outbreak ever recorded, and has now spread from the initial three countries involved (Guinea, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone) to the capitals of Liberia and Nigeria.
- Among the newly recognized cases in Liberia are two volunteer health care workers from the United States.
- As of July 27, 2014, according to WHO, a total of 1,323 cases and 729 deaths (case fatality 55-60%) had been reported across the three affected countries.
- EVD is characterized by sudden onset of fever and malaise, accompanied by other nonspecific signs and symptoms, such as myalgia, headache, vomiting, and diarrhea. Patients with severe forms of the disease may develop coagulopathy and multi-organ dysfunction, including hepatic damage, renal failure, and central nervous system involvement, leading to shock and death. Cases are not infectious until they become symptomatic.
- Person-to-person transmission occurs through direct contact with virus-containing body fluids (e.g., blood, semen, vomitus, urine, feces and probably sweat) from a person who has developed signs and symptoms of illness. Maximum incubation period is 21 days from exposure to onset of illness (average 8-10 days). Risk of transmission during the incubation period is thought to be negligible.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers the risk of importation to the United States to be low, but still recommends vigilance as set forth above.

For more information, see attached CDC Advisory at <http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00364.asp>.