

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local health departments, Infectious disease physicians, Hospital laboratories, Emergency rooms, Hospitals and Healthcare facilities, Infection control

FROM: IDPH Communicable Disease Control Section

DATE: May 24, 2018

SUBJECT: Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Key facts:

- 1.) At this time, the World Health Organization (WHO) has determined that the global risk for spread is low, and has advised against any travel or trade restrictions.
- 2.) IDPH is actively monitoring information from the WHO and the CDC regarding the EVD outbreak in the DRC, and will continue to share any key updates.
- 3.) Neither the CDC nor IDPH are currently recommending enhanced or EVD-specific screening of returning travelers.
- 4.) Should the situation change, IDPH will provide immediate updates.

Situational Awareness: As of May 23, 2018, 58 total cases of EVD have been reported from the Bikoro region of the Equateur Province of the DRC. This includes 28 confirmed cases, 21 probable cases, and 9 suspect cases. There have been 27 deaths reported. A total of five healthcare workers have been affected, with two deaths. The case count includes cases in the provincial port city of Mbandaka, which has a population of 1.2 million.

International Response Efforts: The DRC National Coordinating Committee, along with the Health Ministries from Mbandaka and the major metropolitan area of Kinshasa, CDC, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID), and the WHO are collaborating with Médecins Sans Frontières, the International Federation of the Red Cross, the Institute of Medicine, and UNICEF to support local response efforts.

There are many significant challenges given that this is a multifocal outbreak with proximity to the Congo River. These factors raise concerns about the risk of spread to neighboring countries. The WHO has instituted exit screening at airports, land, and seaports in the region. However, at this point WHO has *not* declared this a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. Involved agencies are conducting surveillance, case investigation and management, contact tracing, advising on appropriate burial practices, engaging the community, and deploying mobile

laboratories. In addition, there is an aggressive vaccination effort underway that is furnishing ring and health care worker vaccinations. Healthcare workers are being provided pre-deployment vaccine.

Recommendations and Resources:

- **Travel Notice:** The CDC has classified this as a Watch Level 1, meaning that travelers should practice usual precautions (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/ebola-democratic-republic-of-the-congo>).
- **Asymptomatic returning travelers:** Currently, asymptomatic travelers from the affected region are being advised to conduct self-monitoring for 21 days after leaving an affected region. If symptoms develop during the 21 days, travelers should seek medical attention and inform their healthcare provider about their travel history. The healthcare provider should notify the local health department, but should not delay evaluation and treatment.
- **Screening for individuals seeking medical care:** Currently no enhanced, or specific screening for Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) is recommended. Healthcare facilities should continue to obtain a travel history in triage before completing full patient evaluation so that appropriate infection control precautions and patient placement can begin promptly.
- **Health Information for Travelers to this Region:** Health information and prevention recommendations for travelers to this region can be found at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/clinician/none/democratic-republic-of-congo>

If you have question or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to IDPH's Communicable Disease section at: 217-782-2016.