

Dallas County Medical Society to Assist Dallas County Health and Human Services by Providing Scientific Information About Ebola

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DALLAS — The physicians of the Dallas County Medical Society have volunteered to assist Dallas County Health and Human Services Department by responding to residents' questions about Ebola in Dallas. DCHHS is coordinating the national effort to contain the spread of Ebola, including contact tracing and twice-daily symptom checks of 50 potentially exposed people. DCMS physicians representing two committees — Community Emergency Response and Infection Prevention and Control & Antimicrobial Stewardship — will support DCHHS' efforts by providing clinical, scientific information to residents and officials.

"Our partnership with DCMS means we have more resources available to address public concerns about Ebola," says DCHHS Director Zachary Thompson. "We care about our residents in Dallas County and want them to have the correct information. DCHHS is committed to public health and appreciates the support of DCMS in this Ebola case."

The Dallas County Medical Society represents approximately 7,100 member physicians and is the second-largest county medical society in the U.S.

"DCMS is proud to partner with DCHHS to educate the public about the Ebola virus," says DCMS President Todd A. Pollock, MD. "It is very important that the residents of Dallas County clearly understand the science behind the Ebola virus and how it is transmitted. There is no need for unwarranted fear based on misinformation. We welcome the opportunity to educate the public as we have done in similar situations throughout our 138-year history."

"We've seen the devastation caused by the Ebola virus in West Africa, and we understand it may be frightening for some people," says DCHHS Medical Director/Health Authority Christopher Perkins, DO, MPH. "That's why it is very important for individuals to not only have factual information about Ebola, but also to understand the United States has a remarkable public health infrastructure able to stop this disease before it spreads."

"We gladly support DCHHS during this critical time," says John T. Carlo, MD, chair of DCMS' Community Emergency Response Committee. "By making the appropriate scientific information available to Dallas citizens, we hope to dispel some of the myths surrounding this virus and enhance the public understanding of how our world-class health system works to keep us safe."

DCMS physicians have long been trusted community leaders and have influenced many local public health issues. DCMS organized Dallas' participation as a field test site for the Salk polio vaccine in 1945, co-sponsored a countywide rubella immunization program to combat the 112-percent increase in reported cases in Texas in 1970, and distributed AIDS educational booklets to Dallas public school students during the HIV/AIDS crisis. More recently, DCMS worked with Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins to coordinate efforts to conduct aerial spraying against West Nile Virus in 2012 and petitioned the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality with practical steps to clean North Texas air in 2013.

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About DCMS: The Dallas County Medical Society unites and empowers physicians to support the health of all residents in the metropolitan region. DCMS is a professional organization of approximately 7,100 local physicians, medical students and residents dedicated to serving Dallas-area patients, making it the second-largest county medical society in the United States. DCMS physicians have compiled a list of answers to Frequently Asked Questions about Ebola, available at www.dallas-cms.org/community_health/ebola.cfm.

About DCHHS: The mission of the Dallas County Department of Health and Human Services is to protect the health of the citizens of Dallas County through disease prevention and intervention, and through promotions of a healthy community and environment. This is done through assessment, community input education, disease monitoring, regulation, and health services that help control the spread of disease. Resources, both human and financial, are directed toward areas where improvement in public health services is needed. The department will make every effort to ensure the people of Dallas County receive information and services needed to maintain and improve their health and provide good stewardship of public resources.

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