



Sunday, October 12, 2014

On September 30, the Texas Department of State Health Services confirmed that a patient in Dallas was diagnosed with Ebola Virus Disease, the first diagnosed case in the United States. This morning, Dallas County officials confirmed a second patient has been also infected.

Dallas County Medical Society leaders have been engaged with this situation since the beginning, including the DCMS Board of Directors and staff; the DCMS Community Emergency Response Committee, chaired by John T. Carlo, MD; and the DCMS Infection Prevention and Control and Antimicrobial Stewardship Committee, co-chaired by Wendy Chung, MD, and Edward Goodman, MD. We are providing the following information to help DCMS members, other physicians in Texas, and your patients address Ebola related concerns in response to this latest development.

What we know:

As reported in the media, the second case in Dallas involves a healthcare worker at Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas. The healthcare worker had direct contact with the first Ebola patient as an inpatient at the hospital. As of today, October 12, there is no evidence of transmission of Ebola virus in Dallas outside of the hospital setting. Further, none of the 48 community contacts to the first case (Mr. Duncan) has shown signs or symptoms of Ebola infection.

However, in anticipation of a rise in concerns from patients, we provide the following information:

- All hospitals in the Dallas-Fort Worth area need to remain ready to receive patients potentially infected with the Ebola virus.
- There currently is no change in CDC guidelines for infection control and prevention of Ebola transmission as a result of the new case identified today, October 12.
- As of October 12, none of the 48 individuals identified as Ebola community contact cases are showing signs and symptoms of Ebola virus.
- The case confirmed today was a healthcare worker who treated Mr. Duncan while Mr. Duncan was an inpatient at Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas.
- Further details will be provided once Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas completes its assessment of how this transmission may have occurred.

If a patient presents in your office and identifies him or herself as someone on the health department's community contact list:

Only 48 individuals are on the list, so most patients will not be in this group. If they do experience symptoms, all 48 individuals on this list of specific community contacts have been given specific instructions to contact Dallas County Health and Human Services or the appropriate local/state health department prior to seeking treatment.

The odds are very low, but if a patient states that he is on a community contact list, isolate the patient immediately, [following the CDC guidelines available online](#)!. Immediately contact the health department at 214-677-7899 or 1-800-705-8868 for further instructions.



If a patient presents in your office and is NOT on the Contact List:

Patients who present in your office and express fear of an Ebola virus infection should be evaluated using the criteria outlined in the [DCHHS Health Advisory dated September 30, 2014](#)². Necessary reporting instructions are included in the Health Advisory.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Parkland Hospital staff, in cooperation with experts from the Dallas County Health & Human Services, the Texas Department of Health Services, and the Centers for Disease Control have produced a video providing instructions on the proper use of PPE to protect health care workers from Ebola. We encourage you and your staff to [view this video](#)³, which is available on YouTube.

Patients Listen to a Trusted Voice — YOU!

Physicians play an important role in providing fact-based answers to patients during any public health crisis. We encourage you to become the informed trusted source of information for the community. Please visit the [Ebola Update section of the DCMS website](#)⁴ for a full set of resources, including answers to frequently asked questions. Feel free to share this link with your patients.

DCMS physicians have long been trusted community leaders and have a long history of responding to many public health issues, from organizing Dallas' participation as a field test site for the Salk polio vaccine in 1945, to leading the county's response to the West Nile Virus epidemic in 2012. Physicians are one of society's most trusted voices, so it is imperative that we speak up and contribute to the conversation using factual information based on medical science.

We will continue to keep you informed as this situation unfolds.

Todd A. Pollock, MD
President, Dallas County Medical Society

John T. Carlo, MD
Chair, DCMS Community Emergency Response Committee

¹ <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/infection-prevention-and-control-recommendations.html>

² http://www.dallas-cms.org/community_health/DCHHS/DCHHS_Health%20Advisory_Ebola_093014.pdf

³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GNKJL1_ejg

⁴ http://www.dallas-cms.org/community_health/ebola.cfm