



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

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*****HEALTH ALERT*****

October 15, 2014

The Texas Department of State Health Services' laboratory reported positive test results for two new ebola patients on October 11 and October 15, 2014. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed these positive diagnoses. Both newly infected individuals are Presbyterian Hospital nurses who were involved in the care of the index ebola patient in Dallas, and were rapidly tested after onset of symptoms. All community and healthcare-worker contacts of the index and second ebola patients have been identified and are being monitored by a joint team from local, regional, and state health departments, as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These contacts do not represent an increased risk to Texas' general population. The CDC, Dallas County Health Department, and Texas Department of State Health Services are currently working to identify the third ebola patient's potential contacts, including those who may have been in contact with on a flight from Cleveland to Dallas on Monday.

Healthcare providers should be alert for symptoms and travel histories that might indicate ebola and evaluate patients' risk of exposure. (Persons who entered Nigeria on or after September 30, 2014 are not at risk for exposure to ebola.) "Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) Algorithm for Evaluation of the Returned Traveler" and "Checklist for Patients Being Evaluated for Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the United States" are attached to this alert and are also available under PATIENT EVALUATION at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/index.html>. We continue to urge healthcare providers to first contact their local health departments, rather than the CDC, for help evaluating risk factors for persons presenting with ebola-like symptoms. Local health departments (LHDs) have the necessary information to help physicians use the CDC tools for initial ebola risk factor screenings and provide guidance on triage infection prevention. LHDs also have contact numbers for the Department of State Health Services Emerging and Acute Infectious Disease (EAID) Branch, which can contact the CDC for consultation as needed.

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has the capacity to perform presumptive testing for ebola. All testing must be approved by DSHS prior to specimen submission. No ebola testing can be performed without an EAID evaluation, with the exception of those persons who are already identified as contacts of the two confirmed cases.