

Protecting and improving the nation's health

Current Ebola virus risk assessment at Police Custody Suites

There is currently an outbreak of Ebola virus disease occurring in West Africa, which was first reported in March 2014 in Guinea. As of 8 October (7 October for Liberia and Guinea) a total of 8,399 compatible cases (CCC) of Ebola virus Disease (EVD) (4,655 confirmed), including 4,033 deaths have been reported mainly from countries with widespread and intense transmission (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) and in very limited numbers, from countries with an initial imported case(s), with or without localised transmission (Nigeria, Senegal, Spain and USA).

Ebola is a rare but serious viral infection, spread person to person by direct contact with blood and body fluids of infected people. The incubation period of Ebola ranges from 2 to 21 days, and so whilst unlikely, it is not impossible that a person infected in Guinea, Liberia or Sierra Leone could arrive in the UK before developing symptoms. To date, the case of a British Health Care Worker, who acquired the disease while working in a hospital in Sierra Leone, and was subsequently repatriated to the UK for treatment, is the only case reported in this country.

Screening for symptoms of the disease have been introduced at airports in the 3 countries of West Africa for exiting passengers and are being introduced at the main airports in this country for in-coming passengers from affected areas.

The above measures are designed to further reduce the already limited risk of importation of cases to this country.

Only a small number of new detainees in Police Custody Suites will have arrived from West Africa within the preceding 21 days, however those that have may need to undergo a risk assessment to determine if they might be at risk of Ebola infection. This algorithm has been developed to assist Police staff in Police Custody Suites when dealing with detainees recently arrived from West Africa.

Any person who has been in West Africa in the previous 21 days should be risk assessed using the algorithm attached. If there are any concerns, please contact the nearest A&E Department/Infectious Disease Department for medical advice and your local Public Health England health protection team for further public health advice.

PHE publications gateway number: 2014429

Further information about the Ebola virus outbreak can be found on the following webpages:

Public Health England (including the outbreak and maps of affected area): https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ebola-virus-disease-clinical-management-and-guidance

World Health Organization (WHO): http://www.who.int/csr/disease/ebola/en/index.html

First published: October 17 2014

Up-dated version published:

© Crown copyright 2014

Re-use of Crown copyright material (excluding logos) is allowed under the terms of the Open Government Licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/2/ for terms and conditions.



Current Ebola risk assessment at Police Custody Suites

Algorithm to inform the initial assessment of detainees arriving at a PCS from West Africa.

Has this person arrived from Guinea, Liberia or Sierra Leone or have they spent any time in these countries within the past 21 days?



If no, continue as normal

If no, continue as

normal



If yes, ask these questions

Prior to their departure, has this person:

- Come into contact with blood or body fluids from a person known/ suspected to have Ebola?
- Cared for anyone with a severe illness, or who has died of an unknown cause?
- Attended any funerals or had any contact with any dead bodies?
- Attended any other large gatherings of people?
- Visited any traditional healers or been admitted to hospital?
- Hunted or consumed bush meat?



If yes, ask these questions

Is the person currently unwell with a fever >38° C, or a history of fever in past 24 hours?

Other possible symptoms of Ebola include: chills, weakness, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, bruising, or bleeding.



If not currently unwell, ensure review within 24 hours and subsequently if becomes unwell within the 21 day period, if still in custody.



If yes, contact urgently nearest A&E Department/Infectious Disease Unit.

Clinical advice to support the Ebola risk assessment can be obtained through the Imported Fever Service (0844 7788990) or Infectious Disease specialist at the local hospital.

The local health protection team should be contacted immediately to discuss isolation measures and public health issues around testing and transfer to hospital for further assessment and management.

October 2014