

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (2) in DH SEB CD/8/15/1

30 July 2014

Dear Doctor,

Updated Situation and Reporting Criteria of Ebola Virus Disease

Further to our letter sent to you on April 2, 2014, we would like to provide updates on the latest situation of the outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD).

Since the first report of the EVD outbreak in West Africa in March this year, the cumulative numbers of cases attributed to EVD are continuously increasing. As of July 23, 2014, there have been 1 201 cases, including 672 deaths, in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, making this EVD outbreak the most extensive ever recorded in terms of geographical spread and overall number of cases and deaths reported.

Transmissions in community and health-facilities are still taking place. Between 21 and 23 July 2014, 96 new cases and 7 deaths were reported from Liberia and Sierra Leone. In Guinea, 12 new cases and 5 deaths were reported during the same period. The surge in the number of new EVD cases in Guinea after weeks of low viral activity demonstrates that undetected chains of transmission existed in the community. Transmission occurs in rural areas, in peri-urban areas notably in capitals in Guinea (Conakry), Liberia (Monrovia), and Sierra Leone (Freetown), and in districts alongside country borders in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

The risk of infection for travellers is still low at the present moment. Person-to-person transmission was resulted from direct contact with body fluids or secretions of an infected patient. However, medical practitioners should always consider EVD in the differential diagnosis of febrile illness in any person with recent (within 21 days) travel history to affected areas/countries, i.e. Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone (as of July 29, 2014). The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) will closely monitor the situation and update the affected areas from time to



time. Please refer to our website (http://chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/evd_affected_area.pdf) for the updated list of affected areas/countries.

In this regard, we would like to solicit your assistance in notifying the CHP if you encounter patients fulfilling both the Clinical Criteria **AND** Epidemiological Criteria below:

Clinical Criteria

- Suffering from a sudden onset of fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$, 100.4°F);
- OR
- Having at least one of the following symptoms/signs: inexplicable bleeding, bloody diarrhoea, bleeding from gums, bleeding into skin (purpura), bleeding into eyes, or haematuria;
- OR
- Any inexplicable sudden death.

AND

Epidemiological Criteria

One or more of the following within 21 days before onset of illness:

- Close contact* with a confirmed or probable case of Ebola Virus Disease or his/her bodily fluids;
- OR
- Resided in or history of travel to an affected area/country#;

* Such as sleeping in the same household with a case, direct physical contact with the case (dead or alive) during the illness, direct physical contact with the (dead) case at the funeral, touched his/her blood or body fluids (including semen) during the illness, touched his/her clothes or linens, breastfed by the patient (baby).

Affected countries (as of July 29, 2014): Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. For the updated list of affected countries/areas, please refer to the following website: http://chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/evd_affected_area.pdf

Patients meeting the above reporting criteria should be isolated immediately. Medical practitioners are reminded to notify the Central Notification Office (CENO) of CHP via fax (2477 2770), phone (2477 2772) or CENO On-line (<http://ceno.chp.gov.hk/>). Please also call our Medical Control Officer at 7116 3300 a/c 9179 for prompt investigation. CHP will make arrangement to send the patient to the Hospital Authority Infectious Disease Centre in Princess Margaret

Hospital for isolation, testing and treatment.

For further information on EVD, please refer to the Annex or visit the CHP website at http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/34199.html. Thank you for your ongoing support in combating communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S K Chuang', written in a cursive style.

(Dr S K CHUANG)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health

Key facts

- Ebola virus disease (EVD), formerly known as Ebola haemorrhagic fever, is a severe, often fatal illness in humans.
- EVD outbreaks have a case fatality rate of up to 90%.
- EVD outbreaks occur primarily in remote villages in Central and West Africa, near tropical rainforests.
- The virus is transmitted to people from wild animals and spreads in the human population through human-to-human transmission by direct contact (via broken skin or mucous membranes) with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected people, and indirect contact with environments contaminated with such fluids.
- Fruit bats of the Pteropodidae family are considered to be the natural host of the Ebola virus.
- Severely ill patients require intensive supportive care. No licensed specific treatment or vaccine is available for use in people or animals.