

# Communicable Disease Branch

## 2018 Program Alert

“Local Health Department Guidance for Evaluation and Management of Ill Persons with Recent Travel to the Democratic Republic of Congo”



Date: May 18, 2018

To: Communicable Disease Staff in Local Health Departments

From: Jean-Marie Maillard, MD, MSc

The Communicable Disease Branch (CDB) wants to make local health departments aware of an outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the northwestern part of the country. The DRC government declared the outbreak on May 8 after two cases were confirmed by laboratory testing. This situation is fluid and evolving. At this time, there have not been directives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to actively monitor travelers from this region. If recommendations change, the CDB will issue further Program Alerts with detailed instructions, guidance documents and details of upcoming webinars.

Recommendations at this time for local health departments are to:

- Contact the CDB epidemiologist on call at 919-733-3419 if notified of illness in a person with travel to the DRC since May 8<sup>th</sup>,
- Review and update 24/7 contact lists both internal and external, and
- Review and prepare to update policies, procedures and standing orders related to EVD and other high-consequence pathogens.

### SYMPTOMS OF EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE

Symptoms of Ebola may include fever, severe headache, joint or muscle pain, fatigue or weakness, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, or unexplained bleeding. **If any of these symptoms are noted in a person with recent travel to DRC, please call the CDB epidemiologist on call at 919-733-3419 for consultation.**

### ADVANCE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Local health departments are encouraged to work with their community partners (including EMS, hospitals, and health care providers) to review their current capacity and plans. Advance consideration should be given to:

- The operationalization of risk assessment and active monitoring,
- The development of a protocol for use if a symptomatic person with recent travel to an area with active transmission is identified, including a description of the plans for transport and medical evaluation, and
- The development of a protocol for case management of persons who are restricted to their homes or another physical location.

### CURRENT INFORMATION

This is an evolving situation and recommendations are likely to change as new information becomes available. Updated information and guidance are available from the CDC at <https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/drc/2018-may.html> and the World Health Organization at <http://www.who.int/ebola/situation-reports/drc-2018/en/>.

**For more information and consultation, please contact the epidemiologist on call at 919-733-3419.**