

## **Frequently asked operational questions about Ebola**

### **Q What Ebola training do I need?**

A

If you work for the team in an ambulance service that would transfer an Ebola patient, you will have access to training provided by a member of your team who has been on a train-the-trainer programme run by the National Ambulance Resilience Unit (NARU) which includes the cover-all suit training.

If you work in an emergency department you will have access to training using compliant PPE model cover-all suits using a NARU training package available on the Public Health England (PHE) website.

For everyone else, you will follow standard infection control precautions for suspected infectious disease cases and that training is provided by your direct employer.

### **Q How does my trust ensure it has sufficient supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?**

A

Each trust has a responsibility to its staff under their duty of care to ensure it has the PPE needed. There is now a dedicated team in the supply chain that provides the necessary advice and equipment.

### **Q What should I do if we have an Ebola patient in my trust? Am I safe to come into the building?**

A

If there is a suspected or confirmed Ebola patient in the hospital, they will be contained in isolation as per the guidance and there is no risk to the broader staff or patients..

Ebola is only transmitted through close bodily contact with infected body fluids. It is not airborne. Transmission through contaminated surfaces is low and reduced by appropriate cleaning

### **Q What do non-clinical staff, such as cleaners and receptionists, need to know about Ebola?**

A

First of all it is difficult to catch as it is NOT airborne and can only be contracted through contact with the bodily fluids from a symptomatic patient .

Anyone self-presenting at a doctor's surgery, walk-in or emergency department is unlikely to have the virus and the symptoms are similar to other illnesses, including malaria.

However surfaces can be treated with basic cleaners, such as bleach because the virus is not robust.

If cleaners are required to handle Category A waste from a confirmed Ebola patient, there are specific requirements and staff will have undergone appropriate training

**Q What should I say to other patients if we have an Ebola patient or suspected case in the hospital?**

A

For both eventualities, the trust communications team will have a message to issue to staff and patients. As with any situation patient information is confidential.

If the patient is in isolation while test results are awaited and there is sufficient concern among patients and staff, the message will only say that a patient is undergoing tests – one of which is for Ebola.

The trust will say when the results are expected if known and that in the meantime the patient is being looked after in isolation, following nationally agreed guidelines and protocols to protect the health of staff and other patients.

When a case has been confirmed, the message will say that the trust will follow well-rehearsed protocols for the handling and care of patients with infectious diseases. The intention is to ensure the patient receives the best possible treatment at this time and that staff, patients and visitors to the hospital are kept safe.

Patients and visitors will be reassured that the hospital remains fully open and that the best possible advice is being received from Public Health England and Ebola experts.

A risk assessment will be undertaken and it is likely that the confirmed Ebola patient will be transferred at the earliest opportunity to the High Level Isolation Unit at the Royal Free Hospital, in London to continue their expert care

**Q How will I know if my trust is prepared for an Ebola case? Who should I ask and where would I find information?**

A

All trust chief executives have been asked to undertake an assurance process and have confirmed they have the necessary training and PPE in place so that they can manage a suspected Ebola case. The results of this assurance process should be available through the trust management team.

All detailed guidance can be found on the PHE website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ebola-virus-disease-clinical-management-and-guidance>