



Department
of Health



Public Health
England



**To: NHS Trust Medical and
Directors of Nursing**

Publications Gateway Ref No. 02266

19th September 2014

Dear colleagues

As you may be aware, the UK is at the forefront of the international support for the countries in West Africa currently facing an outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD).

Through this letter we want to provide guidance, as staff working within the NHS, for those wanting to volunteer to support the humanitarian crisis in West Africa.

Recently, the Department for International Development (DfID) announced that it was working with British military and humanitarian experts to set up an EVD treatment centre in Kerrytown, Sierra Leone. The 62 bed facility will be purpose built with military engineer input and military clinical staff. The UK Government is currently working with Save the Children to design a long term plan to manage and operate the facility after it has been fully set up.

The treatment centre will comprise of a 12 bed unit for healthcare workers, including any local or international medical volunteers. It will provide high quality specialist care to ensure essential health workers can continue to respond to the disease as safely and efficiently as possible. A co-located 50 bed unit will be built for treating additional patients with the disease. This centre will be staffed by international health workers and staff from Sierra Leone, and will provide treatment to both adult and paediatric victims of the disease.

The UK has been at the forefront of responding to the epidemic. It is acknowledged that the key to combatting this epidemic is supporting in-country front line health workers and underpinning a fractured health system in Sierra Leone. The UK's aim is to provide the very best life-saving health service under the most challenging conditions.

To this end, anyone wanting to volunteer to support the EVD response in West Africa, should please bear the following in mind:

- Staff wishing to support this response should register with the UK International Emergency Medical Register (UKIEMR).
- UK-Med was established in 1995 to facilitate the provision of health workers from across the UK to support the hospitals in Sarajevo during the Balkans war. Subsequently it has dispatched teams to a range of countries and crises, including Cape Verde, Kosovo, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, China, Indonesia, Haiti,

the Philippines Jordan, Iraq and Gaza and has robust arrangements in place to cover recruitment, health screening, pre-deployment training, back fill costs for employing organisations and support once a deployment has been completed.

Information can be found on the UK-Med website www.UK-med.org

- Roles that may be required include medical practitioners, nursing staff, paramedics, pharmacists, psychologists, health information managers, logisticians and outreach managers. Examples of the roles required can be found on the UK-Med website.
- Initial help is requested from those with previous experience but we anticipate that as the situation develops, those with generic skills will be welcomed.
- NHS funded organisations and/or practices will have leave policies in place. Staff wishing to support the EVD response in West Africa must comply with their organisation's leave policy. Lead clinicians and managers must ensure that, as with all leave requests, safe staffing levels and services are maintained in the NHS in England.

Thank you for your consideration and support for this initiative and please do consider volunteering as laid out above.

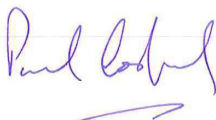
Yours sincerely,



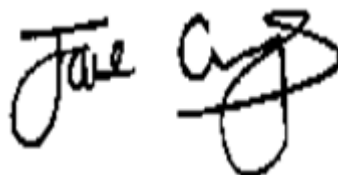
Prof Sir Bruce Keogh
Medical Director
NHS England



Dame Sally Davies
Chief Medical Officer
Department of Health



Prof Paul Cosford
Medical Director
Public Health England



Jane Cummings
Chief Nursing Officer
England