



Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools



Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D.
Secretary

Date: October 23, 2014

To: Superintendents of Schools

From: *Lillian M. Lowery*
Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D. and Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D. *Joshua M. Sharfstein*

Re: Ebola Virus Disease Resources for Schools

The purpose of this memo is to provide you with information and guidance related to the Ebola virus. Ebola virus is a severe, often fatal, viral disease in humans, and is the cause of ongoing outbreaks in several West African countries (currently Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone). Although there were recently cases of Ebola virus disease identified in the United States, there have been no cases of Ebola diagnosed in Maryland and **the general risk of acquiring Ebola in Maryland continues to be extremely low.**

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) is in frequent communication with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and regularly provides guidance to Maryland hospitals and health care providers about a range of infectious diseases, including Ebola virus disease. DHMH is also working with the Maryland State Department of Education and local school officials to communicate information to families and staff.

As we continue to monitor the changing Ebola virus disease situation, it is important for Maryland schools to be prepared to respond to questions related to Ebola virus disease. Schools play an important role in maintaining the health and well-being of students. In addition, schools and school health services program staff fulfill a critical role in monitoring the health status of students and staff with recent travel or immigration from Ebola affected areas.

Currently, the State response efforts are focused on:

1. Dissemination of accurate information to both students and their families;
2. Early recognition and isolation of students and staff who have recently traveled to affected areas and develop symptoms;
3. Immediate notification and consultation with public health authorities of student and staff identified as having recently traveled and have symptoms to better ensure the appropriate actions are taken to protect public health.

To implement the actions above, we are providing you with: 1) a sample letter to inform parents of recommendations to prevent spread of communicable diseases in school; 2) information for staff who have recently traveled to affected areas; 3) instructions on how to respond to illness in a student with recent travel to an Ebola affected area.

Local Superintendents

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Thank you for the invaluable role you, your schools' nurses, administrators and other school personnel play in maintaining the health of our communities. If you have any questions you may contact Alicia Mezu, Health Services Specialist, Division of Student, Family, and School Support, MSDE at alicia.mezu@maryland.gov or 410-767-0353 or Cheryl De Pinto, Medical Director, Health Systems and Infrastructure Administration, DHMH at cheryl.depinto@maryland.gov or 410-767-5595.

LML:JMS

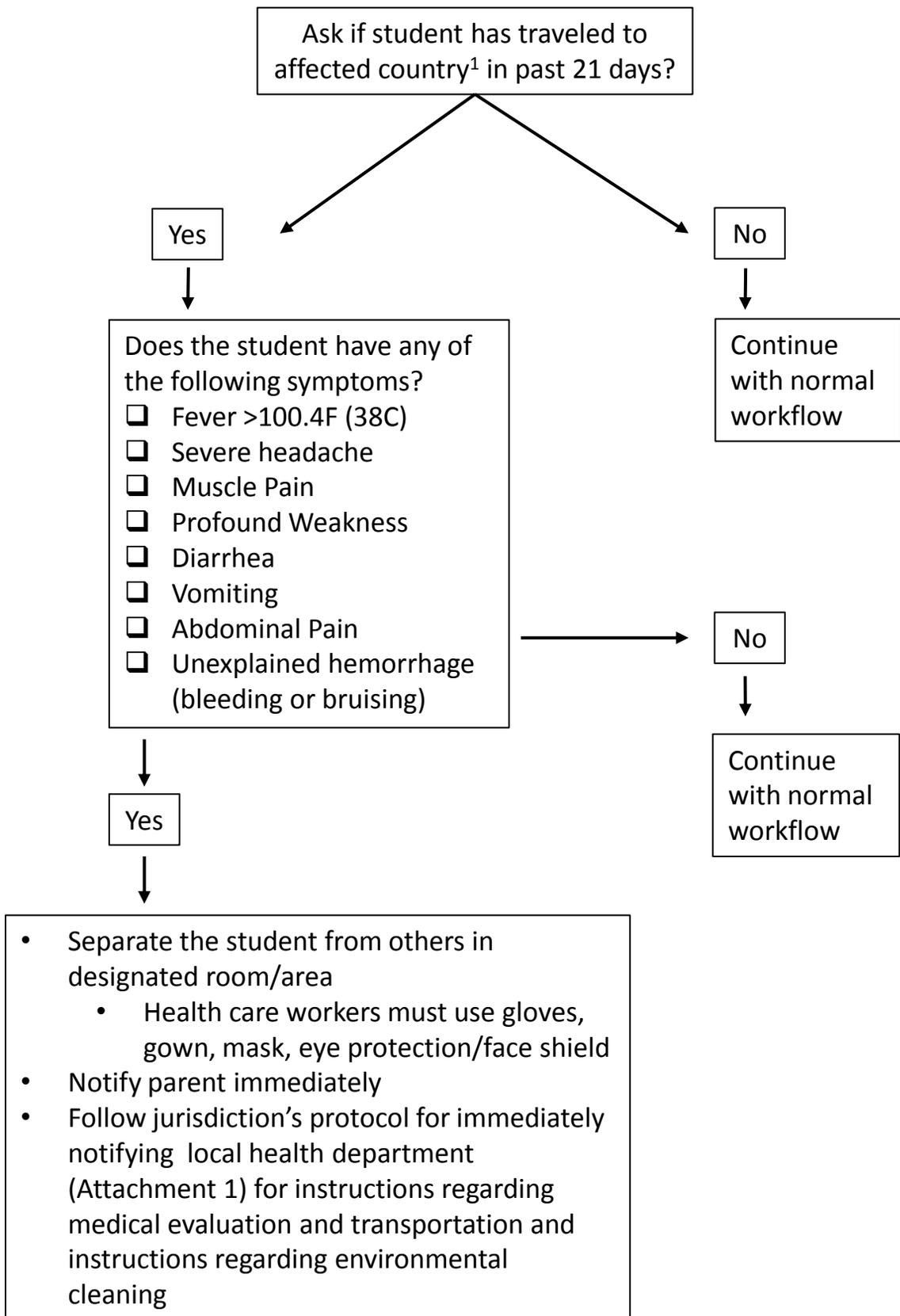
Enclosures (5)

c: Local Health Officers
 School Health Services Coordinators
 Alicia Mezu
 Cheryl De Pinto
 Sherry Adams

DHMH Interim Guidelines for School Health Programs Evaluating Returning Travelers from Ebola Affected Areas

Preparation activities for evaluating students:

- Identify designated room/area to separate student for evaluation
- Ensure proper PPE is available for standard precautions plus fluid-resistant gown, mask, eye protection/face shield



1. <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/distribution-map.html#areas>



Interim Guidance for School Health Services Programs Regarding Students Returning from Ebola Affected Areas

October 2014

Background:

Ebola outbreaks are occurring in several countries in West Africa (currently Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone). Check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website (<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/distribution-map.html#areas>) for the most up-to-date information since affected areas may change. Ebola poses little risk to the US general population. It is spread through direct contact with body fluids (blood, urine, feces, saliva, semen, and other secretions) of an infected person, or with objects like needles that have been contaminated with body secretions.

Ebola is not contagious until symptoms appear therefore, people returning from the affected areas who do not have symptoms are not infectious. There should be no restrictions on their school attendance or normal activities. Fever in people who traveled to the affected areas is most likely due to more common infectious diseases in West Africa (e.g. malaria), but should still be checked by a doctor.

It is always good to avoid contact with anyone who is sick and to wash your hands regularly. Use soap and water if available, or use hand sanitizer. Doing so can help you prevent getting sick from many different illnesses.

For students who are NOT sick:

- Should not be restricted from normal activities.
- Should be advised to follow instructions according to parent letter.

Recommendations for students who are or become sick:

- Students who get sick more than 21 days after returning from an Ebola-affected area **do not** need to be checked for Ebola and are not at risk for Ebola.
- If a student gets a fever during the school day, he or she should be seen by the school nurse. The school nurse should ask about travel within the last 21 days to affected areas. If there is no nurse, the student should be asked about travel within the last 21 days to affected areas by the appropriate staff person (who would routinely deal with health-related issues).

- If determined to have had travel within 21 days to an affected area, school health services staff should be notified and the parent instructed to have the student assessed by a healthcare provider **right away**. Notify the local health department of any of these situations.
- Identified students should stay in a private room/separated area until parent pick-up, and the parent should be told to tell the healthcare provider about the recent travel history **before** going to the doctor's office or emergency room to decrease the chance of spreading possible infection.

**Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Addresses & Telephone Numbers for Infectious Disease Reporting**

* Telephone (T) or Pager (P) Number for After Hours and Weekend Reporting

JURISDICTION	ADDRESS	JURISDICTION	ADDRESS
ALLEGANY Ph. 301-759-5112 Fax 301-777-5669 *T 301-759-5000	PO Box 1745 12501 Willowbrook Road SE Cumberland MD 21501-1745	HARFORD Ph. 410-612-1774 Fax 410-612-9185 *T 443-243-5726	1321 Woodbridge Station Way Edgewood MD 21040
ANNE ARUNDEL Ph. 410-222-7256 Fax 410-222-7490 *T 443-481-3140	Communicable Disease & Epi. 1 Harry S. Truman Parkway Room 231 Annapolis MD 21401	HOWARD Ph. 410-313-1412 Fax 410-313-6108 *T 410-313-2929	8930 Stanford Blvd Columbia MD 21045
BALTIMORE CITY Ph. 410-396-4436 Fax 410-625-0688 *T 410-396-3100	1001 E. Fayette Street Baltimore MD 21202	KENT Ph. 410-778-1350 Fax 410-778-7913 *T(410) 708-5611	125 S. Lynchburg Street Chestertown MD 21620
BALTIMORE CO. Ph. 410-887-2724 Fax 410-377-5397 *T 410-832-7182	Communicable Disease, 3rd Floor 6401 York Road Baltimore MD 21212	MONTGOMERY Ph. 240-777-1755 Fax 240-777-4680 *T 240-777-4000	2000 Dennis Avenue Suite 238 Silver Spring MD 20902
CALVERT Ph. 410-535-5400 Fax 410-414-2057 *P 443-532-5973	PO Box 980 975 Solomon's Island Road Prince Frederick MD 20678	PR. GEORGE'S Ph. 301-583-3750 Fax 301-583-3794 *T 240-508-5774	3003 Hospital Drive Suite 1066 Cheverly MD 20785-1194
CAROLINE Ph. 410-479-8000 Fax 410-479-4864 *T 443-786-1398	403 South 7th Street Denton MD 21629	QUEEN ANNE'S Ph. 410-758-0720 Fax 410-758-8151 *T 410-758-3476	206 N. Commerce Street Centreville MD 21617
CARROLL Ph. 410-876-4900 Fax 410-876-4959 *T 304-610-1139	290 S. Center Street Westminster MD 21158-0845	ST. MARY'S Ph. 301-475-4316 Fax 301-475-4308 *T 301-475-8016	PO Box 316 21580 Peabody Street Leonardtown MD 20650
CECIL Ph. 410-996-5100 Fax 410-996-1019 *T 410-392-2008	John M. Byers Health Center 401 Bow Street Elkton MD 21921	SOMERSET Ph. 443-523-1740 Fax 410-651-5699 *T 443-614-6708	Attn: Communicable Disease 7920 Crisfield Highway Westover MD 21871
CHARLES Ph. 301-609-6810 Fax 301-934-7048 *T 301-932-2222	PO Box 1050 White Plains MD 20695	TALBOT Ph. 410-819-5600 Fax 410-819-5693 *T 410-822-0095	100 S. Hanson Street Easton MD 21601
DORCHESTER Ph. 410-228-3223 Fax 410-901-8180 *P 410-221-3362	3 Cedar Street Cambridge MD 21613	WASHINGTON Ph. 240-313-3210 Fax 240-420-5367 *T 240-313-3290	1302 Pennsylvania Avenue Hagerstown MD 21742 Extension 3290
FREDERICK Ph. 301-600-3342 Fax 301-600-1403 *T 301-600-1603	350 Montevue Lane Frederick MD 21702	WICOMICO Ph. 410-543-6943 Fax 410-548-5151 *T 410-543-6996	Attn: Communicable Disease 108 E. Main Street Salisbury MD 21801-4921
GARRETT Ph. 301-334-7777 Fax 301-334-7771 Fax 301-334-7717 *T 301-334-1930	Garrett Co. Community Health Ctr. 1025 Memorial Drive Oakland MD 21550-4343 (Fax for use during emergencies)	WORCESTER Ph. 410-632-1100 Fax 410-632-0906 *T 443-614-2258	PO Box 249 Snow Hill MD 21863