

OHIO'S EBOLA PREPAREDNESS

Key Points

Ohio activated its Ebola preparedness plan when it learned that an Ebola patient visited the state: Ohio was notified Wednesday morning by the CDC that a Dallas nurse who has tested positive for Ebola visited Summit County on Oct. 10-13. Ohio has been planning for months for a possible Ebola incident and it put those plans in motion upon learning this information. A new 24-hour-a-day hotline has also been activated (1-866-800-1404).

Ohio is taking an aggressive response to this situation: Learning from the experience in Dallas, Summit County is using its quarantine powers to isolate people that had confirmed close contact with the nurse—one person so far. Also, the Ohio Department of Health has issued new, stronger quarantine protocols for local health departments in the event we receive a suspected or confirmed case of Ebola and the state has sent epidemiologists to Summit County to support their work to identify people who had contact with the Dallas nurse. Also, Ohio and local health care officials are working with the CDC in order to receive the latest information on developments as well as to quickly learn about new recommendations for managing an Ebola patient.

Ohio and local health care officials have been preparing for Ebola since this summer: The Ohio Department of Health has been working since summer to make sure those on the frontlines—local doctors, EMS, hospitals and local health departments—have the information and resources they need. Officials from the Ohio Department of Health and local health care organizations recently came together to discuss the status of their preparedness efforts and to conduct a table top exercise to test the response to a hypothetical positive case. The CDC recently certified Ohio's high-security state health lab to be able to test for Ebola so that Ohio health care officials can get test results as quickly as possible. Ohio has a strong, statewide system of public health authorities at the county and city level, as well as a high-quality network of health care providers, and they all have experience dealing with infectious diseases and the resources and training to prepare for and respond to any serious outbreak.

Facts About Ebola:

- Ebola is a rare and deadly disease caused by infection with one of the Ebola virus strains. Ebola can cause disease in humans and nonhuman primates (monkeys, gorillas, and chimpanzees).
- Ebola is spread by touching the blood and body fluids of a person who is sick with Ebola, or things with their blood and body fluids on it like clothes and bedding. Ebola is not spread through the air, food or water.
- Patients are contagious only when they are symptomatic and show signs of a fever.
- Anyone believing that they have been in contact with a person with Ebola should call their health care provider

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