



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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Communicable Disease Unit

PUBLIC HEALTH PRESS RELEASE

To: All Media
From: Lisa B. Hernandez, MD, MPH, Health Officer, Santa Cruz County
Date: Nov. 12, 2014
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CURRENT SITUATION

The 2014 Ebola epidemic is the largest in history affecting multiple countries. As of 11/04/14, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reported 13,241 Ebola cases with 4,950 deaths. Currently only Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mali and Guinea have active cases of Ebola. In the U.S., there have been three imported cases, including two deaths, and two acquired cases in health care workers. While the risk of Ebola is considered to be very low in our county, we will continue to strengthen our response to communicable disease outbreaks by working with our hospitals and local clinics. To that end, **the Health Services Agency will be participating in a Statewide Medical/Health Exercise on Nov. 20th to test our Ebola response systems.**

LOCAL UPDATE

- There is a system in place to detect and monitor travelers returning from the affected countries as well as health care workers who have had direct contact with Ebola patients.
- This system consists of the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) notifying the Public Health Division (PH) of the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency of the presence of exposed individuals in our county.
- Members of the Communicable Disease Unit staff will determine the status of each exposed individual based on answers to a questionnaire developed by the CDC and CDPH. The extent of a quarantine order will be based on the answers to these questions regarding travel history and contact with Ebola patients.
- To protect the privacy of any individuals returning from the affected countries and to ensure compliance with any quarantine orders, the Public Health Division will not be releasing any information on monitoring activities.
- If a resident thinks they have been exposed to Ebola, we are asking that they DO NOT go to the Emergency Room but should call their physician for instructions on seeking medical care.
- For the latest information on the progression of this epidemic, please visit www.santacruzhealth.org and click on "Ebola Info" or call the CDPH Ebola hotline, M-F, 8am to 5pm at 855-421-5921.

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