EBOLA MONITORING PROTOCOL

Ebola hemorrhagic fever is a severe often fatal illness in humans. No widely available treatment or vaccine is yet available. The outbreaks are now primarily in three countries in Western Africa (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) with an additional smaller outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo from an unrelated strain of the virus. The disease is transmitted by direct contact with blood or bodily fluids or by contact with infected animals or objects contaminated by the virus. Airborne transmission has not been documented.

Potential symptoms of the disease include:
- Temperature above 101.5 degrees
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Stomach pain
- Unexplained bleeding or bruising

In late September, 2014, a person who had traveled from Liberia to Texas was diagnosed with Ebola. That individual subsequently died and two health care workers who cared for him became infected with the virus. They are both expected to fully recover. On October 23rd, 2014, another health care worker from New York City who had been treating Ebola patients in Guinea was diagnosed with the disease. He is undergoing treatment at a New York hospital. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention is handling the contact investigation and quarantine of all those who have had close personal contact with these health care workers.

The threat of disease transmission to the general population remains low. Because the threat risk is low, USM is following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advice for Colleges, Universities and Students about Ebola in West Africa. It is recommended that Universities remain vigilant and monitor persons who either are traveling to, or have arrived from, the areas where there are outbreaks. Among the steps to be taken are:

1. Monitor and observe the CDC Travel Health Notices (http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices) and avoid all official travel to these areas.
2. Surveillance by Multicultural Program, International Programs and English Speakers of Other Languages Program, University Health & Counseling Services (UHCS) to identify any individuals who have been to endemic areas within the past 21 days or have been in contact with anyone suspected of having Ebola.
3. UHCS will interview any individuals with a positive response to #2 above and inform them about the need to monitor their health status for the 21 day incubation period.
4. A person without symptoms may be asked to monitor their temperature for the 21 day period. Other possible measures, such as quarantine, will be determined and guided by the CDC and the Maine CDC.
5. If an individual with a positive history develops a fever or he/she has other symptoms, he/she will be referred for immediate medical care to a health care facility that has suitable treatment resources on-hand and that facility will be advised prior to the person’s arrival. The CDC will be notified as well as
the Maine CDC. They will take the lead and be responsible for directing all responses and guiding the university accordingly.

The areas at USM that are most important to serve as front line monitors are:
- Multicultural Program
- International Programs
- English Speakers of Other Languages Program
- University Health & Counseling Services
- Residence Life RD’s and RA’s

Due to the current lack of danger regarding transmission of the disease, it is recommended that a low key approach be used in dissemination of the University’s monitoring plans. A reference to them will be placed on the University Health & Counseling Services (UHCS) website. Multicultural Program, International Programs and English Speakers of Other Languages Program will be asked to link to the UHCS information.

This Protocol should be distributed to the front line monitors identified above. In addition, it should be disseminated to Vice Presidents, Deans, and Directors as informational material in the event that there are faculty/staff who are traveling to endemic areas or they are asked by students or people in their area if the University has established a plan or procedure.

If you have questions about Ebola or how the University is responding, please contact University Health & Counseling Services at 780-5411.


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