Ebola: advice and risk assessment for security staff, managers of residences and first aiders.

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</table>

Contents

1. Scope ....................................................................................................................... 1
2. Introduction ........................................................................................................... 2
3. Risk assessment flowchart .................................................................................... 3
4. Isolation of suspected cases ................................................................................ 4
5. Cleaning .................................................................................................................. 4
   5.1 Suspected cases while being assessed ............................................................... 4
   5.2 Cases assessed by medical professionals as not Ebola-related ...................... 4
   5.3 Confirmed cases of Ebola infection .................................................................. 4
7. Contact information referred to in this guidance ............................................... 5
8. Prompt card ............................................................................................................. 5

1. Scope

This guidance is to assist staff responding to someone who is unwell in the University and who may have returned from a country affected by the Ebola virus. It describes a simple 3 step identification and referral flowchart.
2. Introduction

There is currently an outbreak of Ebola virus in West Africa, with most cases occurring in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. University of Bristol work-related travel to the area has been restricted due to Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advice and insurance requirements and our records suggest that it is unlikely that any students would be returning home to those countries and returning to Bristol again at the start of term. University staff volunteering to assist with the crisis will also have a return to work plan agreed with HR and the Occupational Health Service. The risk of Ebola infections in the UK is considered very low by Government agencies due to the measures implemented to reduce the risk of international spread of disease, e.g. airport screening, the specific monitoring of returning crisis volunteers and the fact that the Ebola virus is only transmitted by direct contact with the blood or other body fluids of an infected person showing symptoms of the disease.

However, there have been some false alarms in the UK, including at some Universities. Public Health England (PHE) has issued specific advice for University first aiders responding to calls where a person is unwell and there is a concern that they may be infected with the Ebola virus. The information and risk assessment flow chart contained in our guidance is based on their advice and is aimed at first aiders and other first responders, e.g. security staff, porters and residences staff, dealing with unwell members of the University or visitors. It should help them to be reassured that the person is not infected with the Ebola virus or, in the unlikely event that they identify a suspected case, to take appropriate actions.

People who may be responding to cases of ill health should be familiar with and follow the directions in the enclosed flow chart. If someone shows any of the symptoms described under Step 1 of the flow chart and has returned from any of the countries listed under Step 2 within the last 21 days then it is a requirement that the procedure in step 3 must be followed using the additional guidance on isolation and cleaning.

Please bear in mind:

- University domicile records suggest that it is unlikely that any students will be returning from any of the affected countries and other University related travel is restricted due to FCO advice and insurance requirements.
- The general risk of Ebola arriving in the UK is very low.
- Any persons arriving back in the UK having travelled from any affected country, and who are free of symptoms, are not infectious and there should be no restrictions on their education or normal activities.
- There have been several previous outbreaks of Ebola in other parts of Africa, but none have led to cases being contracted in Europe.
- Transmission of Ebola from person to person is by direct contact with the blood and the bodily fluids of an ill person with the disease. The virus is not spread by the airborne route.
- The time between contact with the infected person and the time that first symptoms appear (Incubation period) of Ebola ranges from two to 21 days.
3. Risk assessment flowchart

The following flowchart should be considered and followed when attending to an unwell person in the University.

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**STEP 1**

Follow good first aid practices e.g. wear gloves and avoid skin, blood and body fluid contact. If the person appears unwell, do they have any of these symptoms?
- fever (e.g. pale skin, sweating or shivering)
- headache
- sore throat
- joint pain
- diarrhea
- vomiting
- physical weakness

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**STEP 2**

Have they spent any time in the last 21 days in:
- Guinea
- Liberia
- Sierra Leone
(or had close contact with someone who has and has symptoms)

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**STEP 3 – Immediate professional assessment is required**

1. Contact NHS 111 then Security Services on (0117 33) 11223. Advise NHS 111 that you are from the University, explain the situation and that the person may need screening for Ebola.
2. NHS 111 can assess and if necessary arrange for a suitable ambulance
3. Keep people clear and you keep clear of any body fluid spills. Security Services should cordon off the area if outside or isolate the patient in the room while awaiting the ambulance.
4. Security Services should contact Safety and Health Services (0117 92 88780)* who will notify and liaise with the Bristol health protection team at PHE (0300 3038162 option 2).

* use the University contingency plan contact rota if necessary or out of hours.
4. **Isolation of suspected cases**

While awaiting the emergency services:

- The unwell person should be isolated in the room or area.
- In the unlikely event that there has been a spillage of body fluid (e.g. blood or vomit) from the unwell person then Security Services will also ensure that a cordon exists around the affected area. This must not be entered and no clean-up should be attempted until further advice has been sought from Safety and Health Services who will liaise with the Bristol health protection team at PHE regarding a risk assessment of the situation (see below). The Incident and Crisis Management Framework should be followed if applicable.

5. **Cleaning**

In the unlikely event that an unwell person is being assessed for Ebola infection and areas have been contaminated with body fluids, Safety and Health Services will liaise with the local health protection team at PHE, Site Services and Sustainability regarding decontamination. National guidance is available from PHE for differing scenarios in non-healthcare settings which will be summarised below ([https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ebola-environmental-cleaning-guidance-for-potential-contamination-excluding-healthcare-settings](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ebola-environmental-cleaning-guidance-for-potential-contamination-excluding-healthcare-settings)):

5.1 **Suspected cases while being assessed**

- Public places through which the case passed transiently, such as corridors, will not need any special cleaning if there is no visible contamination with body fluids (e.g. vomit, blood etc.).
- In the unlikely event that a public place has been contaminated with body fluids by the suspected case, it will remain cordoned off with assistance from Security Services. This must not be removed or any cleaning undertaken until Safety and Health Services have confirmed further actions with the Bristol health protection team at PHE.
- Indoor areas that may have been contaminated by body fluids, including living areas and bathrooms, will have been isolated by Security Services. Such areas must not be accessed or any cleaning or disposal undertaken until a test result is available.
- The Incident and Crisis Management Framework should be followed and relevant contacts informed as required.

5.2 **Cases assessed by medical professionals as not Ebola-related**

- This will be through testing or risk assessment co-ordinated by PHE.
- No further special action will be necessary for cleaning or waste disposal above normal cleaning procedures for body fluid spills managed through Site Services.

5.3 **Confirmed cases of Ebola infection**

- The Incident and Crisis Management Framework will be followed.
- Safety and Health Services will liaise with the Bristol health protection team at PHE and any cleaning will be organised with their assistance and where advised, a specialist contractor will be arranged.
7. **Contact information referred to in this guidance**

Security Services - 0117 33 11223 (24 hours)

Safety and Health Services – 0117 92 88780 (8.30-4.30 M-F. Contact rota via Security at other times)

Bristol health protection team at Public Health England - 0300 3038162, option 2.

The Incident and Crisis Management Framework should be followed where business continuity is affected and for confirmed cases of Ebola infection

8. **Prompt card**

This summary of the risk assessment flow chart could be cut out and carried by first responders.

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**First responders: Ebola infection assessment**

Call NHS 111 and Security Services (0117 33) 11223 if an unwell person has:

- Fever
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Joint pain
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Physical weakness

returned in the last 21 days from:

- Guinea
- Liberia
- Sierra Leone

Isolate and stay clear of spilled body fluids

Guidance for the University of Bristol. Safety and Health Services, University of Bristol