

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

PRESS RELEASE

ON THE EBOLA VIRAL DISEASE PREPAREDNESS MEASURES IN KENYA FOLLOWING THE OUTBREAK IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

For Immediate Release: Tuesday May 16, 2017

On 9 May, the World Health Organization (WHO) was informed of a cluster of undiagnosed illness and deaths including haemorrhagic symptoms in Likati Health Zone, Bas Uele Province in the north of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), bordering Central African Republic.

The Outbreak was declared by WHO on 12th May, following one positive test for Ebola virus in a specialised laboratory in the capital, Kinshasa while additional laboratory samples are currently being tested.

Since 22 April, nine (9) suspected cases including 3 deaths have been reported. Six (6) cases are currently hospitalized. Further investigation of the outbreak is ongoing.

While the Ministry is fully aware of the seriousness of Ebola Virus disease and the risk of importation of the virus to Kenya, we wish to assure the public that the outbreak has occurred in a remote zone in DRC and with timely effective responses having been mounted, the disease is unlikely to spread widely in the region.

As you are aware, the Ministry of health had put in place strategic measures in place following the outbreak of Ebola Virus in West Africa in 2015/2016. Nonetheless, the following additional measures have been undertaken:

1. Released an **alert to health workers** countrywide regarding the outbreak events in DRC and therefore need to have a high index of suspicion.
2. Reactivated the **Rapid Response teams** for enhanced surveillance and follow up of travelers with elevated body temperatures and asymptomatic cases with history of travel from/through DRC
3. **Strengthened Screening and surveillance of travellers from/through DRC at all points of entry:** All persons with travel history from and /or

through DRC, especially in affected area will be required to provide minimum package of information to guide investigations. This will include and not limited to the following; personal details, exact location of origin/transit, history of contact with potential EVD cases, presence of any suggestive signs and symptoms of EVD and declaration of contact while in the country) will be collected to aid personal risk assessment and daily follow-up for 21 days if they will still be resident in the country.

4. **Information on EVD** will be provided to both incoming and outgoing travellers at all points of entry.
5. **Holding rooms** at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport have been reactivated to isolate EVD suspected cases identified to be high risk while awaiting possible transfer to isolation facilities after thorough assessment.
6. The diagnostic services at KEMRI, Isolation/treatment centres at Kenyatta National Hospital and Regional facilities have been put on high alert to enhance capacity to detect and response in order to effectively care for suspected cases of Ebola in the Country.
7. The Ministry has an adequate stock of **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** which are stored in strategic regional hospitals for use if needed. These include at least 5,000 special full body suits used in situations of highly infectious material.
8. The Ministry has reactivated the **multiagency Outbreak Coordination Committee comprising of public health experts in Government and development partners** to assess the situation at the country, regional and global and advice on possible response activities.

Lastly, we wish to assure Kenyans that there is no suspected case of Ebola Virus in the country and they should remain vigilant, look out for any such illnesses and report to the nearest health facility without delay for immediate verification and investigation.

The Government through the Ministry of Health remain committed to ensure appropriate and effective measures are instituted in order to protect Kenyans and the general public from imported Ebola Virus.

For more information and any inquiry, contact the **Emergency Operations Centre**, Ministry of Health on the numbers; **0732353535, 0729471414**

Dr. Jackson Kioko
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES,
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

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