

Metro Region EMS Medical Directors Position Statement

Ebola Virus Disease¹: The Need for Specially Trained and Equipped 911 Transport Capabilities

It is the consensus opinion of the Metro Region EMS Medical Directors that EMS transport teams equipped with advanced personal protective equipment (PPE) and properly trained in donning and doffing be utilized in community 911 response to cases where Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) is suspected. We believe that the development of EMS resources with advanced capabilities in personal protective equipment leads to safer care provided by personnel who have undergone additional training in higher levels of PPE than is generally required in routine EMS practice. We also believe that such an approach would be more cost effective and improve resource allocation in an environment where PPE and training resources are limited. Some EMS services may develop these specialized capabilities internally while others may organize a regional response based on mutual aid agreements. Specialized EMS response capabilities have been deployed successfully in other areas where patients and communities have unique needs. Examples of these special deployments include critical care interfacility transports, neonatal transports, specialized rescue teams, and hazardous materials responses. Services without personnel trained or equipped in advanced PPE are encouraged to develop mutual aid agreements with those who can provide that capability. Use of on-line medical control can facilitate decision-making in these often complex situations.

Ebola Virus Disease: Expectations from Receiving Hospitals to Prehospital Personnel Involved in the Care of Persons Under Investigation for Ebola²

The information gained from the responses to the following questions will be used by Metro Region EMS Medical Directors to determine appropriate receiving hospitals for patients being transported by EMS who meet the CDC definition of a person under investigation for Ebola Virus Disease.

The responsibilities for receiving hospitals to notify prehospital providers (Police/Fire/EMS) of a potential exposure to a communicable disease is governed by the Emergency Medical Services Personnel Exposure Law³ (MN Statutes 144.7401-144.7415) For receiving hospitals we recommend the following;

1. Hospitals shall formally commit their abilities and willingness to accept EMS patients suspected of having Ebola.
 - Hospitals unable to receive such patients shall declare this to the EMS community via the Hospital Compact and the Metro Region Emergency Services Board.
2. Hospitals prepared to receive EMS patients suspected of infection with the Ebola virus shall have standardized procedures related to the following:
 - A system to receive pre-notification by inbound EMS units of a patient under investigation for Ebola infection (suspected or confirmed).
 - Establish a pre-determined method for transfer of patient care from EMS and placement of patient into appropriate isolation rooms.
 - Provide a designated area for doffing PPE for prehospital personnel. This doffing area shall be sheltered from the elements and out of public view.
 - Provide a designated area where prehospital personnel can decontaminate their vehicle.
 - Receive and appropriately dispose of contaminated PPE and medical waste generated by prehospital personnel while treating a patient suspected of infection with Ebola.

- A pre-determined process for the notification of MDH regarding prehospital personnel with possible exposure to Ebola during patient care.
- A pre-determined process for notifying involved prehospital crews as soon as Ebola is eliminated from the differential diagnosis or of Ebola blood testing results.

¹ This position statement is applicable to other Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Case Definition for Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/case-definition.html>. Accessed November 21, 2014.

³ Minnesota Department of Health. Emergency Medical Services Personnel Exposure Law (Emergency Medical Services Agency Version). <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/infectioncontrol/ems-agency.html> Accessed November 21, 2014.

The following metro EMS Medical Directors are in agreement and endorse this position statement:

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