PHARMACY OWNER Guidelines for Ebola
How to prepare your business for Ebola and other infectious diseases

Recommend limiting exposure by keeping distance

- Ebola is spread through contact with bodily fluids of symptomatic patients. It is not transmitted via air, and is not likely to be transmitted via inanimate objects, such as money.
- Needlestick incidents are very unlikely to result in an exposure because vaccines given in pharmacies are not recommended for ill patients.
- Short interactions, including shaking hands, are considered low risk of exposure.
- Close contact is defined as prolonged exposure within 3 feet of a symptomatic patient.

Recommend routine disinfection of surfaces

- This provides reassurance as well as preventing much more likely transmissions of disease such as Norovirus.
- 10% bleach or disinfectants labeled as effective against Norovirus are also effective against Ebola.
- Follow product labeling for safe storage, use and handling.

Review protocol with employees for safe cleanup of bodily fluids (e.g., vomit, feces)

- Use 10% bleach or disinfectant that is labeled as effective against unenveloped viruses such as Norovirus.
- If cleanup of bodily fluids is required, ensure that safe procedures are used.
  1. Block off the area until cleanup and disinfection is complete. No visitors or unprotected staff members should be able to access the area.
  2. Use appropriate personal protective equipment (gloves, gown, eye protection, face shield).
  3. Wipe up the bodily fluid as much as possible with paper towel or other absorbent material.
  4. Gently pour disinfectant (or 10% bleach solution) onto all contaminated areas.
  5. Let disinfectant remain on contaminated area for 20 minutes and then wipe up remaining bleach solution.
  6. Remove gloves and place in a biohazard bag with all other soiled cleaning materials.
  7. Double bag and secure biohazard bags in a puncture-resistant container. This material is considered hazardous material and must be transported and discarded properly.
  8. Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water.

Ensure that supplies for personal protective equipment and disinfection are on hand

- Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
- Face mask (e.g., N95)
- Disinfectant (bleach or labeled disinfectant)
- Biohazard bags
- Puncture-resistant container
- Absorbent material (such as paper towels, kitty litter, or absorbent bed pads)
- Waterproof gloves
- Gown or Tyvek suit (fluid resistant/impermeable); consider other protective gear such as hair, leg, and shoe covers
**Identify location to isolate patient in while waiting for transport to hospital**

- While it’s very unlikely that a symptomatic patient with Ebola would present to a pharmacy, ensure patient is kept at least 3 feet away from customers and staff.
- N95 masks are not recommended for use on patients as Ebola is not airborne.

**Review human resources procedures that may be impacted**

- Sick leave and disability policies and coverage for potential isolation/quarantine
- Policies regarding employees unable to come to work due to school closures
- Policies regarding employees afraid to come to work due to fear of exposure

**Establish a point person for employees to contact if a suspected exposure has occurred**

- Name & phone number to contact: _________________________________________________________

**Establish a relationship with the Local Health Department**

- Health Department Phone Number: __________________________________________________________
- Directory of Local Health Departments is available at www.naccho.org/about/lhd/
- The Health Department can enroll you & your pharmacists in the Health Alert Network to provide additional information and warnings as they pertain to your community.
- Should a contact with a potential Ebola patient occur, the Health Department will provide guidance, evaluate the situation, and decide on further monitoring or testing.
- The Health Department may be able to help coordinate removal of biohazard waste, if required.

**Gather credible information sources and reassure staff and patients on the low risk of spread in the US**

- CDC Ebola Virus Disease www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola

**Footnotes**

1. CDC. Interim Guidance for Environmental Infection Control in Hospitals for Ebola Virus.
2. EPA listing of disinfectants effective against Norovirus
3. CDC. Review of Human-to-Human Transmission of Ebola Virus
4. CDC. Who Should NOT Get Vaccinated with these Vaccines?
5. Department of Transportation Guidance for Transporting Ebola Contaminated Items, a Category A Infectious Substance
6. Parkland Hospital. PPE Procedures for Suspected Ebola Patients
7. NACCHO. Directory of Local Health Departments
8. CDC Algorithm for Evaluation of the Returned Traveler
9. CIDRAP. Doing Business During an Influenza Pandemic
10. Infectious Substance

Rx Response is an independent, not-for-profit (501(c)3) organization dedicated to ensuring the supply of medicine to patients after public health emergencies. For more information, contact Rx Response at ContactUs@rxresponse.org.