
EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE: OUTBREAK IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

06 August 2014

EVENT SUMMARY

Ebola virus is the cause of a viral haemorrhagic fever. The virus originated in Central Africa and is thought to have spread to humans by handling or butchering of infected animals such as bats, monkeys, gorillas or pigs.

An outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) in West Africa was first reported in March 2014. The outbreak continues and is the largest outbreak of EVD ever reported. As of 04 August 2014, the World Health Organization (WHO) reports a cumulative number of 1,711 cases and 932 deaths, resulting in a case fatality rate of 54%.

WHO also reported that between 2 and 4 August 2014, 108 new cases (laboratory-confirmed, probable, and suspect cases) of EVD and 45 deaths were reported from four countries as follows: Guinea, 10 new cases and 5 deaths; Liberia, 48 new cases and 27 deaths; Nigeria, 5 new cases and 0 death; and Sierra Leone, 45 new cases and 13 deaths. As the situation is rapidly evolving, figures are constantly updated on the WHO website and the number and classification of cases is subject to change.

The outbreak is not yet under control and new cases are reported daily from both established and new outbreak areas in affected countries. It is reported that transmission continues to occur in health-care settings as well as the community, and capital cities of countries that have been affected.

WHO has identified three patterns of transmission:

1. in rural communities, facilitated by strong cultural practices and traditional beliefs, especially surrounding burial rites;
2. in densely populated peri-urban communities; and
3. cross-border transmission.

Strict isolation and consistent infection control procedures are key infection control practices known to work for EVD, however, their application in this outbreak poses an unprecedented challenge. It is

reported that the situation is being driven by the failure to gain trust and community support which impacts on the ability of public health officials to effectively search for cases and effectively trace, monitor or isolate contacts of EVD patients. The situation is exacerbated by inadequate infection control practices in health facilities and insufficient human resources.

Epidemiological Summary

The Ebola pages of the CARPHA website will be regularly updated with information as the outbreak unfolds and this will continue for as long as necessary.

Table: Confirmed, probable, and suspect cases and deaths from Ebola virus disease in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone as of 04 August 2014 (source: WHO)

Country	Confirmed		Probable		Suspect		Total	
	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
Guinea	351	228	133	133	11	2	495	363
Liberia	143	128	252	110	121	44	516	282
Nigeria	0	0	2	1	7	0	9	1
Sierra Leone	576	247	49	34	66	5	691	286
TOTALS	1 070	603	436	278	205	51	1 711	932

The total number of cases is subject to change due to reclassification, retrospective investigation, consolidation of cases and laboratory data, and enhanced surveillance. Data reported in the WHO Disease Outbreak News are based on best available information reported by Ministries of Health.

EVENT UPDATES

- Regular WHO updates: <http://www.who.int/csr/don/archive/disease/ebola/en/>
- Regular US CDC updates: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/guinea/>
- Regular PHE updates: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ebola-virus-disease-risk-assessment-of-outbreak-in-west-africa>
- Updated maps of areas affected (US CDC):
<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/resources/distribution-map-guinea-outbreak.html>

Other resources

- Travelers' Health. Ebola in Liberia, US CDC
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/ebola-liberia>
- [Ebola virus disease fact sheet](#), PHAC
- [Ebola virus disease fact sheet](#), WHO
- [Global Alert and Response: Ebola](#), WHO
[West Africa – Ebola virus disease. Travel and transport risk assessment: Recommendations for public health authorities and transport sector](#), WHO