



# News Release

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## Ebola Preparedness

There have been no Ebola cases in Washington State but local hospitals, clinics, health professionals and public health officials are working together to be ready. “The odds of an Ebola patient appearing at any given clinic are small, but when it happens it is critically important to be prepared. Our local health care community is taking this seriously,” said Barry Kling, Administrator of Chelan-Douglas Health District.

Recent actions on Ebola readiness include:

- The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Washington State Department of Health have provided detailed guidance over the last few weeks. These alerts have been shared with individual health professionals and with the managers of hospitals and clinics in this area.
- Care givers are being reminded to get a travel history from anyone having symptoms that could suggest Ebola. If a person with such symptoms has been at risk for exposure to Ebola, the person should be isolated and public health notified immediately by calling the 24/7 public health emergency line 509-886-6499 or the Washington State Department of Health at 1-877-539-4344. Public health will work with the provider to arrange rapid testing through our state public health laboratory, one of 13 nationwide capable of doing initial Ebola tests. Public health will also notify CDC and the state health department, and will immediately begin working with people who have been in contact with the patient. Specific guidance for providers can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/checklist-patients-evaluated-us-evd.pdf> and <http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-126-Guideline-Ebola.pdf>.
- Local hospitals and clinics are in the process of training staff, beginning with those most likely to first encounter a person at risk for Ebola.
- Hospitals and clinics are reviewing procedures for screening and isolation of a person at risk for Ebola, and for the use of protective equipment by care givers. Supplies of protective equipment are being reviewed.
- Leaders of hospitals and clinics are meeting, along with public health, to coordinate local Ebola readiness efforts.

The health care community in this area is working actively to be ready in the event we see an Ebola case in this area.

Reliable information on Ebola is available at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Ebola>