



Paul R. LePage, Governor Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

October 17, 2014

Department of Health and Human Services
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RE: Ebola Preparedness

Dear [REDACTED]

On October 2, 2014, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a "Health Advisory Alert" on *Evaluating Patients for Possible Ebola Virus Disease*. As a leader in Maine's health care delivery system, I ask that you please take a moment to review this correspondence and attachments.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) ***strongly urges*** all hospitals and critical access hospitals to fully adopt the recommended screening procedures, particularly in their emergency and other outpatient departments, to allow for prompt identification and triage of patients who require further evaluation. The enclosed preparedness checklist will help to assure your organization's readiness to handle Ebola patients in your community.

Please read and distribute to your relevant staff the attached Survey and Certification Memorandum, which was delivered to all State Agency Directors by the Center for Clinical Standards and Quality / Survey & Certification Group of CMS. The Memorandum is dated October 10, 2014, and titled *Information for Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) Concerning Possible Ebola Virus Disease*.

Questions about the CMS memorandum should be addressed to hospitalscg@cms.hhs.gov. Questions about the potential Ebola Virus Disease guidance/screening criteria should be addressed to the Maine Center for Disease Control - Disease Reporting Line at 1-800-821-5821.

We appreciate your strong support of this important state and national issue. You can anticipate further guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services as it becomes available.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Albert, RN, Esq.
Director, Division of Licensing and Regulatory Services

cc: Paul R. LePage, Governor
Mary Mayhew, Commissioner, DHHS
Dr. Sheila Pinette, Director, Maine CDC
Sarah Taylor, Assistant Director of Medical Facilities, DLRS
Jay Bradshaw, Director, Maine EMS
Michael Swan, Health Facility Survey Manager, DLRS
William Montejo, Program Manager of Acute Care, DLRS
Joan Smyrski, Assistant Director of Community Programs, DLRS
Bruce Fitzgerald, Director, MEMA
Steven Michaud, President, Maine Hospital Association



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Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/Survey & Certification Group

Ref: S&C: 15-02-Hospitals/CAHs

DATE: October 10, 2014

TO: State Survey Agency Directors

FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group

SUBJECT: Information for Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) Concerning Possible Ebola Virus Disease

Memorandum Summary

- **Screening for Possible Ebola Virus Disease:** the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have issued a Health Advisory Alert on Evaluating Patients for Possible Ebola Virus Disease. The CDC has also issued additional guidance, including a checklist and algorithm for patients being evaluated for Ebola Virus Disease in the United States, as well as a hospital preparedness checklist. Links to these documents are provided.
- **Hospitals and CAHs are strongly urged to review and fully adopt and implement this guidance**

On October 2, 2014, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued the attached Health Advisory Alert on Evaluating Patients for Possible Ebola Virus Disease. The purpose of the Alert is to remind healthcare personnel and health officials to:

- (1) increase their vigilance in inquiring about a history of travel to West Africa in the 21 days before illness onset for any patient presenting with fever or other symptoms consistent with Ebola;
- (2) isolate patients who report a travel history to an Ebola-affected country (currently Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea) and who are exhibiting Ebola symptoms in a private room; and
- (3) immediately notify the local/state health department.

In addition, the CDC has issued a checklist and algorithm for evaluating patients for Ebola Virus Disease, as well as a hospital preparedness checklist. These materials may be found at the following websites:

CDC Health Advisory, 10/02/14 – Evaluating Patients for Possible Ebola Virus Disease [available at <http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2014.asp>]

Checklist for Patients Being Evaluated for Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the United States [available at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/checklist-patients-evaluated-us-evd.pdf>]

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) Algorithm for Evaluation of the Returned Traveler [available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/ebola-algorithm.pdf>]

Detailed Hospital Checklist for Ebola Preparedness [available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/hospital-checklist-ebola-preparedness.pdf>]

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) strongly urges all hospitals and CAHs to fully adopt these screening procedures, particularly in their emergency and other outpatient departments, to allow for prompt identification and triage of patients who require further evaluation and to use the preparedness checklist to assure their readiness to handle Ebola patients.

The list of affected countries and other screening criteria are subject to change. For additional information and updates, refer to CDC's Ebola Virus Disease website: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>.

Questions about this memorandum should be addressed to hospitalscg@cms.hhs.gov. Questions about the potential Ebola Virus Disease guidance/screening criteria should be addressed to the State Epidemiologist or other responsible state or local public health officials.

Effective Date: Immediately. This policy should be communicated with all survey and certification staff, their managers and the State/Regional Office training coordinators within 30 days of this memorandum.

/s/

Thomas E. Hamilton

cc: Survey and Certification Regional Office Management