

October 28, 2014

Notice to Clients Regarding Laboratory Testing of Patients Under Investigation for Ebola

In light of the current Ebola virus outbreak in Africa and the recent cases in the US, many hospital and reference laboratories have instituted policies regarding collection and processing of specimens from patients with confirmed or suspected Ebola. The CDC and American Society for Microbiology recommend the following:

- Laboratory testing of patients with suspected/confirmed Ebola is to be limited to tests essential to patient care. However, patient care and wellbeing is not to be compromised.
- Point-of-care (POC) instrumentation and methods inside or nearby the patient's isolation room is to be used wherever possible to minimize specimen transport and testing within the main laboratory and/or reference laboratory.

Please review your institution's policies regarding screening patients for Ebola. Patients may be at risk for Ebola if they meet the following criteria:

- 1) Within the last 21 days:
 - Travel to/from: Liberia, Sierra Leone, or Guinea

OR

 - Contact with a known Ebola patient

AND
- 2) Symptoms compatible with Ebola
 - Fever
 - Headache
 - Body aches
 - Weakness
 - Diarrhea
 - Vomiting
 - Stomach ache
 - Unexplained hemorrhage

If a patient meets the above criteria, immediately isolate the patient and contact your state health department and/or the CDC prior to collecting or sending any laboratory testing.

Contact information:

CDC Emergency Operations Center: 770-488-7100
The Pathology Center Client Services: 402-354-4541