Ebola: Just the Facts

- ✓ Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) is a very contagious and virulent disease. EVD is transmitted through **direct** contact with the **blood or bodily fluids** of an **infected symptomatic** person or through exposure to objects (such as needles) that have been contaminated with infected secretions.

- ✓ Incubation period ranges from 2-21 days; 8-10 days are most common. The disease is not communicable until the patient begins exhibiting signs and symptoms of the illness.

- ✓ Symptoms occur abruptly and include:
  - Early: sudden high fever, headache, chills, muscle aches
  - Late: skin rash, followed by nausea, vomiting, chest pain, sore throat, abdominal pain, diarrhea, bleeding inside and outside of the body
  - Symptoms become increasingly severe; may include jaundice, severe weight loss, mental confusion, shock, multi-organ failure

- ✓ When responding to a call for patients suspected of exhibiting signs of the Ebola virus, EMS providers need to carefully assess the risk of EVD and strictly adhere to the following recommended strategies to minimize the risk of exposure to EVD:
  - Assess the number of EMS providers needed to care for the patient and limit contact to only providers essential for patient care
  - Don personal protective equipment (PPE) prior to providing direct care.
  - Select PPE according to CDC guidance for EMS personnel:
    - For a patient who is **not** experiencing obvious signs of EVD, PPE should be single-use (disposable) and include a face shield, surgical face mask, fluid resistant gown and two pairs of outer gloves with extended cuffs http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/healthcare-us/emergency-services/emergency-departments.html
    - For a patient who **is exhibiting** obvious bleeding, vomiting and diarrhea, EMS personnel should wear single-use, disposable PPE including: a N95 respirator, fluid resistant impermeable disposable gown extending to mid-calf, two pairs of nitrile examination gloves with extended cuffs, fluid resistant or impermeable boot covers that extend to at least mid-calf or shoe covers, and a fluid resistant or impermeable apron that covers the torso to the level of the mid-calf should be used. http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/healthcare-us/ppe/guidance.html

- ✓ Perform only essential invasive procedures and avoid aerosol-generating if possible.

- ✓ Limit the use of needles and sharps and place immediately in a puncture-proof biohazard container.

- ✓ If the patient is vomiting, give them a large red biohazard bag to contain emesis. If the patient has diffuse diarrhea wrap them in an impermeable sheet.

- ✓ During transport, ensure that an appropriate disinfectant (EPA-registered hospital grade disinfectant with a non-enveloped claim) is available in spray bottles or commercially prepared wipes.

- ✓ Upon arrival at the hospital and transfer of the patient to ED staff, EMS personnel should doff PPE in a pre-designated doffing area while being supervised by a trained observer.

- ✓ After patient transport, the EMS vehicle must be cleaned and decontaminated by personnel donned in appropriate PPE using an EPA-registered disinfectant. Dispose of all patient care equipment (blood pressure cuffs, glucometers), used PPE, linens and contaminated clothing in red bag.

*If the EMS provider's unprotected skin or mucous membranes come in contact with a PUI, the EMS provider should immediately stop working. The affected skin surfaces should be washed with a detergent and the mucous membranes should be irrigated with a large amount of water. The EMS provider should immediately report the exposure and be referred for a post-exposure evaluation and care.

For additional information visit the CDC web-site at: http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html Specific information for Emergency Medical Services can be found at http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/healthcare-us/emergency-services/ems-systems.html An EMS response checklist can be found at http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/ems-checklist-ebola-preparedness.pdf

****EMS providers will need to work with Local Health Department regarding citizen exposures. EMS providers do NOT have authority to quarantine others****