



DATE:	01/14/2016
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Karen M. Murphy, PhD, RN, Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	WHO Declaration that Guinea is Ebola-Free & Cessation of Ebola Screening
DISTRIBUTION:	Statewide
LOCATION:	Statewide
STREET ADDRESS:	Statewide
COUNTY:	Statewide
MUNICIPALITY:	Statewide
ZIP CODE:	Statewide

This transmission is a “Health Advisory” that provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

HOSPITALS: PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, INFECTION CONTROL, NURSING, AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL

EMS COUNCILS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

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PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Summary: The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) recommends that health care providers no longer screen patients for recent travel to specific countries in West Africa, namely Guinea, Liberia, or Sierra Leone. **However, a travel history should be routinely assessed in all patients.**

On December 29, 2015, the World Health Organization declared the end of Ebola virus transmission in Guinea. The same day, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) discontinued their recommendation to actively monitor travelers from Guinea. However, PA DOH will continue active monitoring of travelers from Guinea whose monitoring had already commenced prior to December 29. Previously in 2015, CDC declared Liberia (9/21/15) and Sierra Leone (11/10/15), Ebola-free and recommended that travelers from these 2 countries no longer required active monitoring by public health officials.

For febrile patients who report a travel history to Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone, or any other country in Africa, in the previous 21 days and who present with symptoms consistent with Ebola, evaluation should still be conducted in a private room using routine hospital infection control practices consistent

with for the symptom presentation. Diagnostic testing should focus on conditions consistent with the patient's signs and symptoms, with special consideration for malaria and acute respiratory or gastrointestinal illnesses. [Adapted from Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Health Advisory, End of Ebola Outbreak in West Africa & Revised Ebola Screening Guidelines, January 4, 2016]. To assist health care providers in diagnosing travelers who have returned from malaria endemic regions, PA DOH released the following advisory last month, 2015– PAHAN –321 –12-09-ADV, Malaria Diagnosis, Reporting and Specimen Submission: http://www.health.pa.gov/Your-Department-of-Health/Offices%20and%20Bureaus/epidemiology/Documents/PA%20HAN/2015/2015-PAHAN-321-12-09-Malaria_an.pdf.

This advisory, and others, are accessible at the Pennsylvania Health Alert Network website: <https://han.pa.gov/>. Recent communiqués are archived at: <http://www.health.pa.gov/Your-Department-of-Health/Offices%20and%20Bureaus/epidemiology/Pages/2015-Health-Alerts.aspx#.VoqgOL8o4kk>.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

<p>This information is current as of January 14, 2016, but may be modified in the future. We will continue to post updated information regarding the most common questions about this subject.</p>
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