



2720 Riverside Drive, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sir Charles Tupper Building  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

October 30, 2014

To: All First Nations Chiefs

RE: **Ebola Outbreak in West Africa**

There has been considerable media coverage recently regarding the unprecedented Ebola outbreak in West Africa and the four cases diagnosed in the United States, most recently in New York. I am writing to update you on actions that the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) is taking with respect to addressing Ebola in First Nations and Inuit communities.

To date, there are no confirmed cases of Ebola in Canada. The chance of someone who has been exposed to an infectious person with Ebola arriving in smaller communities rather than major cities is small. Ebola is spread through direct contact, not through casual contact, with someone who is displaying symptoms of Ebola. Furthermore, a person with Ebola is not contagious unless they are displaying symptoms, such as a fever. Therefore, the greatest risk is to people who are caring for individuals who are ill with Ebola or handling the body of a person who has died from Ebola.

FNIHB is working closely with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and the provinces to plan and prepare in the event that a case of Ebola is diagnosed in Canada. We are actively engaged in discussions regarding infection prevention and control and other public health measures needed to prevent the spread of Ebola and protect the health of community members and front-line healthcare providers.

To date, our Regional office is informing and updating health staff working in First Nation communities of the current Ebola guidelines and providing answers to questions the staff may have. FNIHB is also reviewing current Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) stockpile in light of the PPE guidelines for Ebola.

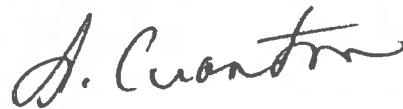
.../2

The Government of Canada has also further strengthened border measures to help prevent the possible importation of Ebola into the country. All travellers identified as having arrived in Canada from an affected West African country are now referred to a Public Health Agency of Canada Quarantine Officer for a mandatory health assessment, including temperature check. The Agency is also increasing its public health presence at Canadian airports to assist in screening of travellers from Ebola-affected regions and to deliver public health education to international travellers.

In addition, should a case of Ebola be diagnosed in Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada has Ebola Rapid Response Teams that are ready to deploy, at the request of the affected province or territory, to assist with surge capacity and provide additional resources to provincial, territorial and local health authorities.

The Ebola outbreak in West Africa is an evolving situation and one that we're watching carefully. FNIHB will continue to communicate and work closely with the Public Health Agency of Canada as well as provincial and First Nations partners to strengthen Canada's preparedness and response efforts. Our Regional Office will continue to keep you informed as efforts to address Ebola in this Region evolve. Should you have any question, please do not hesitate to contact our regional Communicable Disease Control staff at 613-897-3410.

Sincerely,



Keith Conn  
Regional Executive  
Ontario Region  
First Nations & Inuit Health Branch

**If you would like more information or you have any concerns about Ebola, please contact:**

**Crystal Cummings**  
**Health & Family Services Manager**  
**Curve Lake Health Centre**  
**Tel: 705-657-2557**  
**Email: CLHCMANAGER@curvelake.ca**