Monday, October 19, 2014

Dear Denison Community,

As you all are aware, the current outbreak of Ebola in West Africa and subsequent three cases in the United States have created a great deal of public and community health dialogue around education and preparedness for this disease. While Central Ohio communities, including Denison University, have no specific risk of exposure to this infection, we want to assure you that the Whisler Center for Student Wellness and Denison University emergency preparedness personnel are aware of exposure risks, signs and symptoms, and are following recommendations in the
What you need to know about Ebola

The following are key facts about Ebola (EVD) taken from information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization.

- Ebola virus disease (EVD), formerly known as *Ebola haemorrhagic fever* is a severe, often fatal illness in humans.
- Ebola first appeared in 1976 in 2 simultaneous outbreaks, one in Nzara, Sudan, and the other in Yambuku, Democratic Republic of Congo. The latter occurred in a village near the Ebola River, from which the disease takes its name.
- The current outbreak in West Africa, (first cases notified in March 2014) is the largest and most complex Ebola outbreak since the Ebola virus was first discovered in 1976.
- The most severely affected countries, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, have very weak health systems, lacking human and infrastructural resources, having only recently emerged from long periods of conflict and instability.

“What You Need to Know about Ebola” – CDC, Office of Director

- A person infected with Ebola can’t spread the disease until symptoms appear.
- The time from exposure to when signs or symptoms of the disease appear (the incubation period) is 2 to 21 days, but the average time is 8 to 10 days.
- Signs of Ebola include:
  - Fever higher than 101.5
  - Severe Headache
  - Muscle Pain
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Stomach Pain
  - Unexplained Bleeding

- Ebola is spread through direct contact with blood or body fluids. In order for a person to be at risk they must have direct contact through broken skin or through their eyes, nose or mouth. Bodily fluids would include urine, feces, saliva, vomit, sweat, and semen. Ebola also is spread through objects (like needles) that have been contaminated with blood or body fluids of a person sick with Ebola.

- **Ebola is NOT spread through the air, water or food.**

To Protect Yourself against Ebola

- Do wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Do **Not** touch the blood or body fluids of people who are sick.
- Do **Not** handle items that may have come in contact with a sick person’s blood or body fluids, such as clothes, bedding, needles or medical equipment.
- Do **Not** touch the body of someone who has died of Ebola.