



*To Protect and Promote the Health and the Environment of the People of Kittitas County*

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Date: October 20, 2014

Contact: Kasey Knutson, Public Information Officer, 509-962-7515

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### **How Kittitas County is preparing for Ebola and where to get accurate information**

The Kittitas County Public Health Department (KCPHD) urges residents to access accurate sources regarding the current status of Ebola Virus Disease. Agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) provide timely and accurate information about Ebola. Those agencies provide up-to-date information about positive cases as well as accurate transmission and infection control methods.

To date, there are no cases of Ebola Virus Disease in Washington State. There are no Washington State hospitals caring for patients with Ebola Virus Disease. The only cases of Ebola Virus Disease that have been identified in the United States are in Dallas, Texas.

KCPHD is working closely with medical providers and our emergency preparedness partners to ensure the county is prepared to handle a potential case of Ebola Virus Disease. Since August, KCPHD has been sending out messaging to all local healthcare providers with guidelines from the CDC to have a coordinated response.

Dr. Mark Larson, Kittitas County Health Officer, states that “by working closely with medical providers and our first responders we will be ready to protect the health of our patients and our health care providers. An integrated effort will ensure that we are providing the best care available anywhere.”

Our local medical providers and our emergency preparedness partners are reviewing their procedures, ensuring their staff is trained, and providing additional education to employees. For example, clinics and health care settings are providing additional training to all staff and local law enforcement has sent additional education to employees about precautions for preventing transmission of blood borne diseases, including Ebola.

The Ebola outbreak is a reminder that we live in a global society. Easy access to travel means that diseases prevalent in other areas of the world could be an airplane ride away. KCPHD asks residents to get vaccinated against vaccine preventable diseases such as influenza, measles, and pertussis (whooping cough).

For more information about prevention recommendations regarding Ebola Virus Disease visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>. For more information about local preparedness activities, contact the Kittitas County Public Health Department at (509) 962-7515.



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