



## Letter from **THE DIRECTOR**

2014 was unlike any year in CDC's history, challenging and strengthening our unique ability to protect America's health security.

The Ebola outbreak in West Africa tested public health systems around the world. CDC mobilized one of our largest outbreak responses—activating our Emergency Operations Center; quickly deploying disease detectives and other staff; supporting rapid laboratory testing; tracking the disease once it entered the U.S.; helping establish Ebola treatment centers and training frontline healthcare staff across the country; and providing vital expertise and support to all areas of the response.

The response will not stop until America and the world are safe from Ebola. CDC and our partners will continue to have a strong presence in West Africa and beyond until this and future outbreaks are eliminated. One of the great challenges of containing outbreaks is ensuring that science keeps pace with the spread of disease. The U.S. responded quickly to the Ebola threat with emergency funding that will strengthen our ability to respond to health emergencies and improve how CDC stops future outbreaks.

Ebola underscores the need for global health security. The epidemic exposed the fragility of the world's capacity to prevent, detect, and stop disease threats. Ebola reminds us of the critical importance of public health fundamentals—skilled epidemiologists, emergency response, laboratory work, and disease tracking. Every nation needs a sustainable public health infrastructure that includes these fundamentals. CDC and its partners have developed a 5-year Global Health Security Agenda that will support nations to develop this capacity. Because diseases know no borders, strengthening the world's ability to stop threats where they start is the most proactive and cost-effective way to keep America safe.

Also in 2014, CDC took a hard look at worker safety in our biosafety laboratories. After warning calls that fortunately involved no infections of CDC staff and no risk to the public, we again reviewed all laboratory practices carefully. We are working to improve laboratory training, guidelines, and safety monitoring. Our labs are critical to identify new health threats, stop outbreaks, and gain new knowledge—and the safety of our staff and the public is our highest priority.

Protecting the public's health is one of the highest callings—not just for people, but for America. Rigorous science that yields practical, effective public health solutions is the foundation of CDC's mission to save as many lives and protect as many people as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Frieden". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Tom Frieden, MD, MPH





## **WE INVESTIGATE.**

24/7 operations center  
to track disease and  
respond to health crises

## **WE FIGURE OUT WHAT WORKS.**

Research that leads to the  
best solutions to fight  
disease and protect health

## **WE GET RESULTS.**

Proven, lifesaving ways to  
defend against health threats

## **WE WORK 24/7 TO KEEP YOU SAFE.**