

Fact Sheet: CDC Safety Training Course for Healthcare Workers Going to West Africa in Response to the 2014 Ebola Outbreak

Training Course Overview

CDC has developed an introductory training course for licensed clinicians (including nurses, physicians, and other healthcare workers) who are intending to work in an Ebola Treatment Unit (ETU) in West Africa.

The primary purpose of the course is to ensure that clinicians intending to provide medical care to patients with Ebola have sufficient knowledge of the disease and its transmission routes to work safely and efficiently in a well-designed ETU. This course is the first step in preparing clinicians to work independently in an ETU and is based on similar courses developed by [Médecins Sans Frontières](#) (MSF) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

It is strongly recommended that, after completing this training, clinicians receive mentoring and coaching in an ETU designated for such training in an affected country, and before progressing to fully independent work in an ETU. CDC will not deploy graduates of this course to West Africa; this must be done by another group.

Why This Course Is Important

The key to stopping the Ebola outbreak is finding active cases, responding appropriately, preventing future cases and rigorous infection control. There is a great need for well-trained healthcare workers who can provide medical care to Ebola patients. The first step in getting healthcare workers to care for Ebola patients in West Africa is to provide them with the proper training to make sure they themselves don't get infected and can safely provide care.

Course Curriculum

The course will include lectures on Ebola transmission, epidemiology and prevention; small-group exercises on patient triage and working safely in an ETU; and practical "hands-on" exercises conducted in full-body personal protective equipment (PPE) which simulate patient care activities. More information is on the [CDC website](#).

Practical exercises include how to safely put on and remove the full-body PPE, simulated patient and/or body transport, cleaning and disinfecting a patient care area, simulated waste disposal exercise, drawing blood from a simulated patient, packaging a simulated specimen for transport and testing, and responding to a break in PPE in a simulated high-risk area of an ETU.

Course Instructors

The course will be taught by CDC staff medical epidemiologists, advanced infection preventionists (IPs), MSF personnel, staff with recent direct experience with Ebola patients in West Africa and other trained professionals.

Qualifications for Course Applicants

Applicants to the training course should be:

- Intending to deploy urgently to provide clinical care to Ebola patients in West Africa;
- Currently licensed by a recognized professional agency to provide clinical care in some jurisdiction (e.g., hold a medical license to provide care in a state in the United States) and have recent (current or within the past 2 years) relevant experience providing direct care to patients. Participants should be licensed medical doctors (MD, DO, MBBS degrees), licensed nurses (RN, BSN, LPN, etc.), or other licensed clinical care providers (e.g., paramedics, physician assistants, and other clinical providers). At this time, the course is only being held in the United States, and is not intended for other healthcare-associated staff such as laboratory technicians or pharmacists.

- Affiliated with some group (e.g., an NGO or government) that is arranging their deployment to areas affected by the outbreak.
- Able to perform physical activities while wearing full personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for an ETU that maintains Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)- or WHO-level standards of care.

Persons without U.S. citizenship may apply, but the time to process international applications is estimated to be 90 days. Training courses in Africa for Africa-based clinicians and ancillary staff are under development.

Course Cost

The course is free. Participants must arrange their own travel to the Atlanta airport, and CDC will transport them to and from the training facility. Food and lodging is provided. The International Society for Infectious Diseases just announced travel grants to get participants to Atlanta for the course. More information is on the [CDC website](#).

Healthcare Workers Seeking to Prepare for Ebola in U.S. Health Facilities

This training course was designed to simulate working conditions in ETUs in West Africa, and it is not ideally suited for Ebola preparedness training for workers in U.S. healthcare facilities. It is possible for additional cases of Ebola to be diagnosed and treated in the United States. The CDC Information for Healthcare Workers page on the CDC website contains many useful checklists and guidance documents to assist U.S. healthcare facilities to prepare to treat Ebola patients.

Course Dates and Locations

The 3-day course will run most weeks, usually Monday through Wednesday, at the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) in Anniston, Alabama. Anniston is approximately a 90-minute drive from Atlanta, Georgia. Tentative course dates are available on the [CDC website](#).