



Susan D. Harrington, M.S., R.D., Director
Cameron Kaiser, M.D., Public Health Officer

October 16, 2014

Dear City Manager,

With all the news about Ebola coming from Dallas and West Africa, it is understandable there is much anxiety within the community. We, too, at the Department of Public Health have been concerned and have been working for months to be prepared if in the unlikely event a suspected Ebola case is reported in Riverside County.

There are several keys to preparedness:

Communication: We have been meeting and speaking to our partners at local hospitals, medical clinics and first responders. We have asked that partners review their own plans and protocols, look for gaps in the system, and review their internal communication plans. As part of that communication, the Department of Public Health has scheduled presentations to the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) on November 3, 2014, and the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) on November 10, 2014. Department staff are available to make a brief presentation to your City Council outlining preparedness plans.

Flexibility: As more information comes in and lessons are learned, we continue to make adjustments to improve the system and forward that information to our partners.

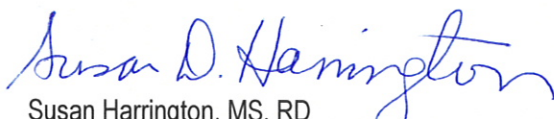
Drills: We recently conducted a table-top exercise among response and health care partners to help identify weaknesses in the system, including ways to improve internal and external communication; expand cooperation between medical facilities; and fine tune screening and safety procedures. Subsequently, a hospital conducted a drill in which a public health nurse acted as a mock Ebola patient to exercise the emergency department staff response.


Cities play an important role, too: As a direct connection to the community and city staff, you have a vital role educating others on a variety of issues, from reassuring them about the readiness of the system, communicating with staff, and providing a calming voice to those who are feeling anxious.

While the Ebola situation remains fluid, we are taking the necessary steps to protect the residents of your community. For more information about Ebola, please see the following link: <http://www.rivcoph.org/Ebola.aspx> (Riverside County Department of Public Health).

Please contact us at (951) 358-7036 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,


Susan Harrington, MS, RD
Director of Public Health


Cameron Kaiser, MD
Public Health Officer