



## Environmental Cleaning and Clinical Waste Disposal Guidance for Potential Ebola Contamination in Non-Healthcare Settings

This document outlines guidance for the public and non-healthcare workers on measures to take in non-healthcare settings that have been contaminated by a suspected or confirmed case of Ebola virus disease, including disposal of generated waste. This replaces previous guidance on environmental cleaning issued on 20 November 2014. For hospital and community healthcare settings, reference should be made to [guidance from the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens \(ACDP\)](#) available on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

### Background

The current outbreak of Ebola in West Africa is the largest known outbreak of this disease and was declared a public health emergency of international concern by the World Health Organization in August 2014. Ebola is caused by infection with a virus which is spread by direct contact with blood and body fluids from infected people who have symptoms.

There remains an expectation that a handful of further cases may occur in the UK in the coming months. Thus, although the risk of imported cases remains low, it is possible that further persons infected in Guinea, Liberia, or Sierra Leone could arrive in the UK while incubating the disease (the incubation period is 2-21 days) and develop symptoms after their return.

Ebola symptoms include fever, headache, diarrhoea and vomiting. It is only after developing such symptoms that a person with the disease can infect others. Once symptomatic, all body fluids such as blood, urine, faeces, vomit, saliva and semen are considered infectious, with blood, faeces and vomit being the most infectious.

Once a person with risk factors for Ebola becomes unwell in the UK, they will be admitted to a healthcare facility and will be tested for the virus rapidly. Support and advice will be provided to all affected by the local healthcare professionals and health protection team (HPT) who will be contacted by the healthcare facility.

### Local health protection team

The HPT is a team of professionals including communicable disease control consultants and health protection nurses. The team will be familiar with the latest procedures and advice on Ebola virus disease. Contact details for your local HPT can be found using the [postcode finder](#) at

<http://legacytools.hpa.org.uk/AboutTheHPA/WhatTheAgencyDoes/LocalServices/PostcodeSearch/>

### Suspected cases

A suspected case is defined as an individual who has risk factors for Ebola, who has become unwell and has not yet been tested for the virus. Areas used by suspected cases that may have been contaminated by body fluids, including living areas and bathrooms, should be isolated. Contaminated items, including soiled linens, should be left where they are. The local HPT should be contacted urgently, who will advise what actions to take until the test results are known.

Public places through which the case passed transiently, such as corridors, do not need special cleaning if there is no visible contamination. Public places which the suspected case has contaminated with body fluids such as vomit, blood or faeces should be cordoned off and urgent advice should be sought from the HPT.

### Cases medically assessed as not infected with Ebola

These cases will either have been tested and found negative for the virus, or will have not met medical criteria for testing. The HPT will contact those responsible for the potentially contaminated areas and inform them of the testing result.

No further special action or precautions need to be taken. Areas previously isolated can be cleaned and then used as normal and any waste can be disposed of normally.

### Arrangements for cases with confirmed Ebola

For confirmed cases, the local HPT will organise the services of a specialist contractor. The specialist contractors will decontaminate the affected areas and dispose of any waste appropriately. If cleaning is required for a suspected or confirmed case of Ebola, do not attempt to do this yourself.

Published (v5): 13 February 2015

© Crown copyright 2015

Re-use of Crown copyright material (excluding logos) is allowed under the terms of the Open Government Licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/> for terms and conditions.

Withdrawn June 2018