



"The London Ambulance Service (LAS) believes it is important to keep in touch with GPs. We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter and we welcome your feedback."

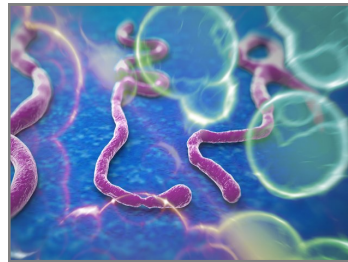
August 2014

## Ebola patients

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), a type of Viral Haemorrhagic Disease (VHF), is a rare but severe disease caused by the Ebola virus. It can result in uncontrolled bleeding and damage to the patient's vital organs and there is a high mortality rate. Currently there is no cure for the disease.

The **EVD virus** was initially transmitted to people from wild animals and spreads within the human population through direct contact with blood and bodily fluids of an infected person. Unlike a flea, the virus is unable to jump onto another person and it does not aerosolize through the air like flu. That means transmission is mainly by hands or through droplet spread when treating a symptomatic patient. Therefore rigorous adherence to standard **infection prevention and control (IPC)** with enhanced additional precautions, following risk assessment, is essential.

**GP alert:** A CAS alert sent to GPs on 1st August 2014 ensured awareness of the management of the patient with EVD/VHF. Medical advice remains that the risk to the UK is very low: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/342321/Ebola\\_QA.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/342321/Ebola_QA.pdf)



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**LAS transport arrangements:** Our specialist Hazardous Area Response Team is responsible for the transfer of confirmed Ebola (VHF) cases to the specialist High Level Infectious Unit, at Royal Free Hospital in London. The crew is provided with enhanced personal protective equipment and adheres to the highest standard of IPC practice.

*Written by Eng-Choo Hitchcock,  
Head of Infection Prevention and Control, LAS.*

## Five Years of Voluntary Responders

This year marks the 5th anniversary of the LAS's first volunteers.

In 2009, The initial Emergency Responders received some clinical training and could travel on blue lights.

Since then, a number of community first responder schemes have been introduced, made up of volunteers trained to use a defibrillator and respond in their own cars without blue lights to incidents in their area.

The LAS has also set up a Voluntary Responder Group charity with Dame Helen Mirren as our patron.

To read more about the charity and our voluntary responders, please visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/l8wqxq3>



## Mental health survey

The London Ambulance Service is keen to consider the views of our patients and service users when developing plans for the future. Our Public & Patient Involvement team engages with a wide range of stakeholders and they are currently focusing in particular on **mental health service users** and patients with **dementia**.

Our first step in this work is to distribute a survey to as many of these patients as we can, with the aim of receiving as wide a range of responses as possible. We will then use the feedback to focus on key themes or suggestions, and hold workshops, interviews and other activities to help us develop an action plan for future developments.

**How can GPs help?** We would be very grateful if you could forward the survey to any patient or service user groups with mental health problems or dementia.

The survey can be completed at:  
[www.londonambulance.nhs.uk/about\\_us/involving\\_our\\_community/patient\\_experience\\_survey.aspx](http://www.londonambulance.nhs.uk/about_us/involving_our_community/patient_experience_survey.aspx)

Alternatively, it can be completed electronically and emailed back to us at [ppi@lond-amb.nhs.uk](mailto:ppi@lond-amb.nhs.uk), or printed out and posted to us (no stamp required) at the Freepost address provided on the survey itself. If you have any questions, please call: 020 3069 0383

