Ebola, Leadership, and Communication
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Past Outbreaks
• First humans cases documented in 1967
• >20 previous Ebola and Marburg virus outbreaks
• Doctors Without Borders and the CDC often respond
• Prior to West Africa Outbreak, no MSF international staff infected

Ebola Unit - Bo, Sierra Leone
Have you ever faced stigma, or hesitated to be completely transparent due to fear of discrimination?

Definitions

- **Stigma** - a set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something; a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person.

- **Discrimination** - the practice of unfairly treating a person or group of people differently from other people or groups of people; unequal treatment of persons, for a reason which has nothing to do with legal rights or ability.

Managing Public Health

Outbreaks: U.S. Ebola Response

1. Stop outbreak at its source (West Africa)
2. Surveillance (monitor and support those coming from Ebola-affected countries)
3. Isolate, diagnose, and treat persons developing Ebola on U.S. soil (with compassion and caring)
4. Dedication to development of primary preventative innovations (vaccines, etc.)
5. Public education and sensitization

LAW: Public Health vs. Individual Rights

- Gravity of harm
- Means of transmission
- Effectiveness of transmission
- Measures to prevent transmission (including behavior change)
- Gravity of individual rights intrusion
- Duration of intrusion
- Effectiveness of measure
- Least restrictive effective measure

What does the science say?

- Enhanced system to ensure public safety = active or direct/active monitoring
- Monitoring will ensure early detection of persons developing symptoms of Ebola in the U.S. after an exposure in West Africa
- Evidence as of today, October 2015 – no community transmission of Ebola in the U.S.

Isolation and Quarantine in the U.S.

Who are our communicators?

CDC Guidelines for “Some Risk”

European CDC Guidelines

Proposed options

The Political Communicators

Governor Christie, “She is obviously ill.”
Cuomo, Christie clarify policy on Ebola health worker quarantines

Incorrect Focus

Ripple Effect of Bad Public Health Policies
Fear + Misinformation = Discrimination
Mental Health – 1999 Report

“This seminal report provides us with an opportunity to dispel the myths and stigma surrounding mental illness. For too long the fear of mental illness has been profoundly destructive to people’s lives. Yet fear and stigma persist, resulting in lost opportunities for individuals to seek treatment and improve or recover.

For our Nation to reduce the burden of mental illness, to improve access to care, and to achieve urgently needed knowledge about the brain, mind, and behavior, stigma must no longer be tolerated.”

Suggested Citation

AIDS ADVOCATS – Compassionate Voices

Activists slam Govs Cuomo and Christie’s hysteria-based Ebola policies

ACLUs of Maine Statement on Ebola Response

ANA supports CDC Guidance, Not Mandatory Quarantine for Health Care Professionals Returning From Treating Ebola Patients in West Africa (10/23/14)
October 31, 2015 – Maine Judge Rules Against Home-Quarantine

Apathy is Dangerous. Leadership is Vital. Advocacy is Necessary.

- Leaders must be held accountable and should follow public health principles and science
- Decisions based on fear is DISCRIMINATION, this cannot be tolerated
- Due process is the only way to ensure quarantine and other public health measures are made based on science and not politics and fear

Keep Advocating!