



Leading Through Change: Emergency Preparedness Response to Ebola

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Background/Objectives

Transformational leadership in response to unplanned change is a hallmark of Magnet®-recognized organizations. Immediately following the first diagnosed case of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the U.S., this dynamic team of nurse leaders proactively led a collaborative effort across the organization to demonstrate advocacy and support of all staff, patients, visitors, and the community.

Vision: Zero transmissions of EVD among staff, patients, or visitors.

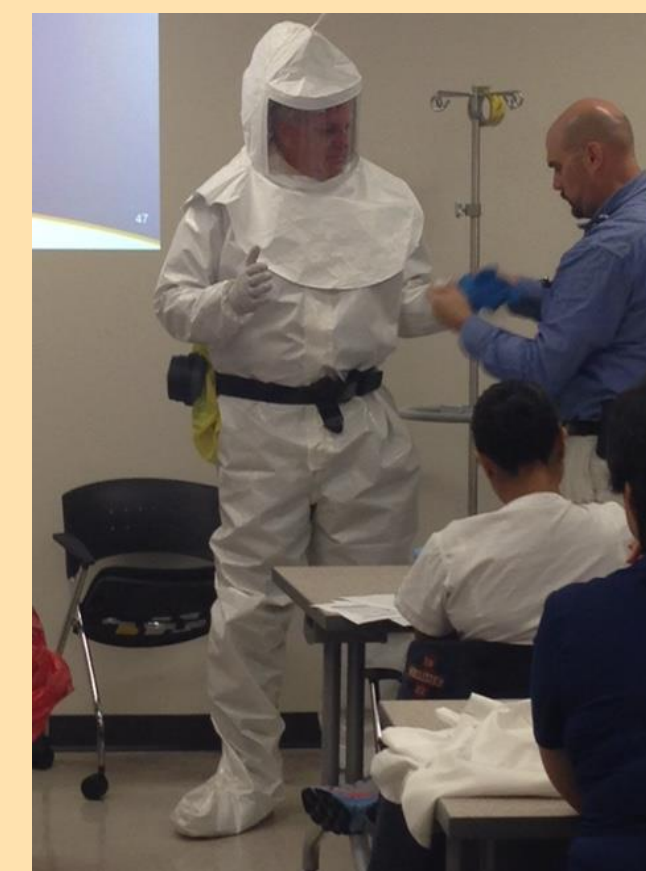
Goal: Convene a nurse-led, interprofessional task force to identify and address the risks and challenges associated with EVD.

Objectives:

1. Oversee the design and construction of a contained, isolation unit within the hospital.
2. Develop and implement an education/training program to provide varying levels of education to all staff throughout the organization.
3. Create and sustain a multi-directional communication network.

Methods

- Convene an Interprofessional Task Force.
- Set up a Communication Command Center.
- Conduct immediate general staff awareness training for all employees.
- Develop and disseminate gateway screening processes/tools.
- Design and construct a self-contained Isolation Unit.
- Develop and administer Simulation Lab Training Program for Ebola Care Teams.
- Maintain a state of readiness at all times.



Outcomes

- A 10-bed observation unit was converted to a fully-equipped, state-of-the-art, two-bed containment unit, complete with separate entrance, a satellite laboratory, and unique waste disposal system over a 5-day period.
- An Ebola Safety Fair provided general education to all medical center employees.
- Risk-based Simulation/PPE training program was developed and administered.
- Coordinated on-going drills for Emergency Department and Isolation Unit.
- Incident command center supported daily operations of the task force.



Challenges/Conclusion

Challenges:

- Staffing
 - Nurse: Patient Ratio
 - Establish Core Multidisciplinary Team
- Education/Training/Competency
 - Occupational Health Medical Clearance
 - Initial Training/Ongoing Drills
- Evolving Issues/Constant Changes
- Supplies/Equipment
- Fear/Anxiety

Conclusion:

Transformational nurse leaders successfully led an interprofessional task force to proactively address a public health issue.

SWRMC deemed a 3rd tier destination site in Virginia for patients who test positive.

Staff at all levels are adequately prepared and trained to screen, recognize, isolate, transport, and care for patients with EVD.

The Sentara Center for Healthcare Ethics was engaged to provide support to staff experiencing stress, anxiety, and moral distress related to EVD.