

Essay on public health

[Health & Medicine](#), [Healthcare](#)



The center for disease control and prevention define public health as, ' the science of protecting and improving the health of families and communities through promotion of healthy lifestyles, research for disease and injury prevention and detection and control of infectious diseases' . The recent Ebola outbreak in west Africa and the first ever transmission of the virus in the united states soil have raised a lot of questions on how CDC handled the outbreak. The outbreak is termed as the worst Ebola outbreak in history with more than 6, 000 people has died from the virus mainly in western African country of guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. International flights spread the virus to other countries including Spain and United States. The rapid spread of Ebola might have been contained if CDC was well prepared to handle such an outbreak. The first case of the outbreak was traced in Guinea from a two-year child who had eaten monkey, squirrel or antelope meat. This single case spread across the three West African countries. DC made major missteps; the agency chose the worst possible action in an effort to calm the public. They pretended to know more about the virus than they actually did. First, the agency insisted that the virus is very difficult to be transmitted from one person to the next which clearly is not the case. In an interview conducted by Vox, Peter Jahrling a virologist confirmed that the current virus exhibits a considerably higher ' viral load ' meaning that it produces more virus particles than any other Ebola virus in history.

Effective communication is a very vital part of crisis management; CDC had the mandate to communicate facts to the people in an effort to raise vigilance among the citizens. On the other hand, the agency could have reacted faster to control the virus from spreading. The measures that CDC

took after the virus spread from West Africa to other countries could have been taken earlier, this could have ensured that the virus is contained, therefore, saving the lives of many people. Since 1976, there have been about 30 reported Ebola virus outbreaks in Africa. Each outbreak presents a new challenge to the medical field and virologists due to the virus mutation; the current outbreak was not the first case. CDC needs to be more prepared to curb future outbreaks.

Global transportation systems present an opportunity and a challenge towards control and prevention of virus and how CDC reacts to numerous outbreaks in different parts of the world. The current transportation systems have enabled CDC to send medical specialists and medications in the affected areas to treat and contain the virus. These systems have also proved to be a challenge since the virus has been spread through international flights. CDC could have taken stringent measures to ensure that the virus was contained before it spread. The provision of much-needed equipment and supplies to be used in the affected countries of West Africa. Screening tools in airports, public sensitization on the virus, public health communication and trainings could have been provided earlier. Proper screening at the airports before entering the United States, full body suits that protect health workers working in the affected areas, setting rules for the removal of equipment and disinfection of hands are the various steps that could have been taken to ensure that the virus did not spread to the US. People who had traveled to the affected countries could have been monitored in a 24 hour basis.

Haiti has experienced the worst cholera outbreak in recent history. According

to the United States center for disease prevention and control (CDC) the outbreak has killed at least 8, 000 people in august 2013 and is still spreading to other neighboring countries such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic. The deadly outbreak occurred ten months after the earthquake that destroyed the nation's capital and the country's southern towns. Haiti is now less equipped to handle the outbreak than it was three years ago before the earthquake; the Haitian healthcare system remains in shambles. Lack of sanitation is another challenge that has made the country and people of Haiti more vulnerable to cholera. Haiti does not have a sewerage system; they rely on what is referred to as bayakou a term referring to a secretive laborer who cleans people's latrines by use of a bucket. A latrine is considered a luxury in the country. Most people particularly in rural areas look for a canal or an open field, and when this is not available, they use what is commonly known as flying toilets.

After the 2010 earthquake, many Haitian still live in camps and tents without proper sanitation and water. This has been a big challenge for the country to contain the disease particularly those living in these camps. The major concern was to provide water and sanitation to the people after the disastrous earthquake, however only temporary measures were taken to solve the situation, long term solution are yet to be implemented to address this problem. Sanitation issues are what kicked off the cholera outbreak that has claimed the lives of many people. The spread of the disease has been blamed on the Nepali UN peacekeepers who leaked sewerage contents into Artibonite River leading to the disease outbreak. However were it not for the Haiti poor sanitation systems, the spread could have been contained. Once

the disease establishes itself in a place, the infectious disease needs proper sanitation, medications and facilities that can contain it, unfortunately, Haiti lack these facilities.

Healthcare providers often find themselves in situations that require them to make the right decisions for the well-being of their patients, community and their staff. Ethics in the healthcare field is very core, and every caregiver is supposed to differentiate between doing the right thing and doing things right. Doing the right thing involves going to any extent to ensure that a patient needs are taken care of regardless of the situation. Patients are faced by a lot of challenges and healthcare providers have to make some serious decisions which may not be popular in an effort to help the patient. A healthcare provider may be faced by a situation that needs him or her to make an important decision. The decision may be contrary to the set rules and guidelines of the hospital. If such a decision will help the patient, then the healthcare provider needs to make it since it is the right thing to do. Doing things right, on the other hand, involves following the set guidelines in handling and treating patients to ensure that they receive the best treatment. In the health care environment, there are various set rules, do's and don'ts that govern the whole medical field, these rules need to be followed to protect the rights of the patients. Observing these general rules and guidelines by caregivers and ensuring that these rights are not violated is what is referred to as doing things right.

Recent advancements in public health have seen a health care system address epidemics and diseases that has caused deaths and suffering among people for a long time. However, this field has experienced new challenges

with the mutation of some of the viruses like Ebola that has caused deaths in the affected areas. The study of the Ebola outbreak and other topics handled in the book such as bioterrorism has changed my way of thinking about public health. While agencies such as CDC have a big role to ensure that such epidemics are controlled, it is the duty of the governments to take stringent measures to ensure that such outbreaks are monitored and contained. Funds dedicated to such emergencies should be set aside to make sure that such epidemics are contained and do not reach uncontrollable levels. The public also has a role to play; they should always be vigilant on matters relating to public health. Any strange symptoms should be reported to a doctor who will conduct tests to determine the disease. Health ministries of different countries should ensure that they have the necessary facilities to contain any outbreaks and should also ensure that the public sensitized on the various communicable diseases and their symptoms. The public should be aware of steps that need to be taken when one suspects of being infected by disease that can easily spread to other people. Bioterrorism presents a challenge that needs governments to work together in order to eradicate it, agencies such as CDC needs to be well prepared to tackle such kind of terrorists activities posed by extremists. This calls for every stakeholder to work together to ensure that the plans of such terrorists do not succeed

Event 1

- i. Medical care providers contact health officials in case of an outbreak that has affected the public and has prolonged for more than two days
- ii. The magnitude of the outbreak determines who the medical care providers

will contact

- iii. Contact is made through personal or home telephones
- iv. The health department conducts tests immediately to determine the cause
- v. Samples from patients such as stool or blood
- vi. Treat and release patients while admitting the serious cases

Event 2

- i. The meeting should involve medical care providers, health department officials and disease control officials
- ii. Nontraditional partners do not need to be brought at this stage because the situation is yet to be assessed
- iii. Steps that needs to be taken to address the issue
- iv. Collecting samples and interviewing patients

Event 3

- i. Follow the interview to deduct key information
- ii. Location, source of their food and water

Event 4

- i. The medical care givers contact health officials Maple County
- ii. The information is shared through phone calls

Event 5

- i. Inform the media that there in the process of determining the cause of the illnesses
- ii. The health department does not have a designated health officer

Event 6

- i. The tourists should be brought to the hospital for further tests
- ii. A translator will assist to break the language barrier

Event 7

- i. The information will be used to carry out further test to determine the cause of the illness
- ii. The restaurants can face closure or fines if they are guilty of food service law violation
- iii. No information should be shared to the media at this point

Event 8

- i. The infection may not have come from the restaurants
- ii. The public needs to be informed the progress of the tests

Event 9

- i. To outsource more medical care givers from other counties
- ii. Committed to ensuring health and safety for all patients and caregivers

Event 10

- Different tests on different patients are being conducted to determine the cause
- Emails, mobile phones, and office telephones
- Available resources such as phone banks can be used to handle the influx
- Doctors, nurses and medical equipment's
- Information on what is causing the ailments and actions being taken
- The message should be broadcasted by the head of health department

through the media after tests are done

- Private owned businesses

Event 11

i. Avail drugs that can treat Shigella Sonnei

Event 12

i. The information should be communicated to the homeland security

ii. The police, FBI and homeland security

iii. The bureau of investigation should take charge of the investigation

Event 13

i. The health department should inform the local newspaper not to publish the story until investigations are complete

Event 14 and 15

i. The EOC has been activated

ii. The health department provides vital information in the EOC command structure

Event 16

i. Public sensitization on the current situation

Event 17

i. Communicate the information to the homeland security for further investigations

ii. The county sheriff contact the health department of Cedar County

Event 18

- i. They should not sell more food until tests are done
- ii. The public health officials should communicate to the public

Event 19

- i. The health officials should respond
- ii. The script should include all the facts and current measures to contain the outbreak

Event 20

- i. The information should be used to determine the best medication that can treat the outbreak

Event 21

- i. Legal issues are handled by the legal department in the county

Event 22

- i. Tests should be done from time to time
- ii. The counties needs to be prepared when such an event is being held to counter terrorisms, security needs to be beefed up during such events

References

Kapur, G. B., & Smith, J. P. (2011). Emergency public health: Preparedness and response.

Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Rosenblum, M., & Boy Scouts of America. (1961). Public health. New

Brunswick, N. J: Boy

Scouts of America.

<https://assignbuster.com/essay-on-public-health/>