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THE DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Press Release

N.C. Department of Health and Human Services' Testing Returned a Preliminary Negative Result for Ebola in Patient at Duke University Hospital

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, November 3, 2014

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Raleigh, N.C. - Testing conducted at the State Laboratory of Public Health, located in the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS), returned a preliminary negative result for Ebola in a patient at Duke University Hospital in Durham. Additional testing will occur 72 hours after his fever first developed to confirm this result.

It is important to note that the patient's fever could indicate other illnesses.

Until the results of additional testing are known, the patient will remain in the contained, isolated and secured unit at Duke in which care has been delivered since admission Sunday night. There are no other patients being cared for on this unit and staff caring for these patients will have no other patient contact during this time. The patient continues to be treated and is also being evaluated for other conditions.

The patient has been and will continue to be interviewed regarding close contacts, activities and travel. Contact tracing remains underway, including precautionary control measures, although public health officials believe the risk of exposure to others is extremely low. Individuals who may have come in contact with the individual once symptoms were present continue to be monitored by their local health departments.

"State and county officials have been working closely with health care providers since July to prepare for the possibility that a patient in North Carolina might be diagnosed with Ebola," said Governor Pat McCrory. "I want to thank Person County Health Director Janet Clayton, Durham County Health Director Gayle Harris, county officials and Duke University Hospital staff to ensure that the patient was transported and admitted using the appropriate health and safety protocols.

"I especially want to thank Secretary Aldona Wos, Director Mike Sprayberry and their staffs for their leadership and efforts to coordinate yesterday's response to the potential Ebola patient."

Ebola is only contagious after the onset of symptoms. Ebola is not spread through the air, water or food - or simply by being near an infected person. Ebola is only spread through unprotected contact with blood or body fluids from an infected person who has symptoms, or with objects like needles that have been contaminated with the virus.

Anyone who becomes ill within 21 days after traveling to an affected area in West Africa should contact a health care provider right away and limit their contact with others until they have been evaluated.

DHHS will provide additional updates when more information becomes available.

Additional Information:

- N.C. DHHS Ebola webpage: <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/ebola/>
- Facts about Ebola: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/facts-about-ebola.pdf>
- What is contact tracing? <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/contact-tracing.pdf>

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