

April 4, 2015

RVH patient transfer to Ebola centre

Despite a low risk and as a precaution, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) has transferred a patient to one of the province's designated Ebola response centres this evening.

Late this morning (Saturday), the patient, who had recently returned from West Africa, arrived at RVH's Emergency department via ambulance with symptoms which prompted County of Simcoe paramedics and RVH to enact their strict and well-developed Ebola protocols. Paramedics were alerted to the potential risk, albeit low, through dispatch and made patient contact wearing full protective equipment.

In accordance with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's guidelines, and in consultation with the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, the patient was transferred directly to RVH's decontamination unit and was then cared for in a negative pressure trauma room, dedicated to suspect Ebola cases. The patient was treated by a specialized Emergency team who were not caring for any other patients. At no time did the patient enter the Emergency department triage or waiting area, and all other patients were moved from the dedicated trauma wing before the patient arrived. Only members of the specialized, trained response team, wearing head-to-toe protective gear, were permitted entry to the trauma wing. Although the risk is considered low-risk the patient will be tested to rule out Ebola at the designated centre.

RVH was well-prepared for this scenario, having planned and practiced its emergency response since last fall. In addition to having a new facility with negative pressure rooms and isolation capabilities, RVH has extensively trained staff and is well equipped to identify, isolate and care for any patient who is suspected of being infected or exposed to the Ebola virus. The health centre's emergency Ebola response plan details the very strict screening protocols and step-by-step actions that occur in suspect cases.

It's important to note that there have been no confirmed cases of Ebola in Canada and the patient is being transferred strictly as a precaution. However, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre's commitment has been to go above and beyond any recommended minimum safety requirements to ensure the safety of other patients and healthcare professionals.

RVH, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit and Simcoe County Paramedic Services will hold a media scrum at 8:30 p.m. outside the Emergency entrance to the health centre.

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About RVH:

RVH is a regional health centre in Barrie, Ontario, located 80 kilometres north of Toronto. As the largest hospital in the region of Simcoe Muskoka, RVH's team of over 350 physicians, 2,500 employees and 850 volunteers provides exceptional care and specialty services to almost half a million residents, including cancer care, stroke services, orthopedics, intensive care, mental health and interventional radiology. RVH is focused on delivering safe, high quality care that puts patients and their families first. For more information visit www.rvh.on.ca

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