

**Ebola: Information, advice and support****1. What is Ebola?**

Ebola virus disease is a rare but severe disease in humans and non-human primates caused by Ebola virus, a filovirus that was first recognised in 1976 and has caused sporadic outbreaks since in several African countries.

There are five distinct species of Ebola virus, of which four have caused disease in humans: Zaïre, Sudan, Tai Forest and Bundibugyo. Reston ebolavirus has caused disease in non-human primates and pigs, but not in humans. No imported case of Ebola haemorrhagic disease has ever occurred in the UK.

The World Health Organisation has declared that the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak occurring in West Africa is an “international emergency”. The Ebola outbreak involves three countries: Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone. The risk to the UK remains very low.

**2. Ebola: information and guidance**

Ebola is a rare but serious viral infection. Transmission of Ebola from person to person is by direct contact with blood and body fluids from an infected person. The spread of the virus is not airborne. The incubation period, the time between infection and symptoms appearing ranges from two to 21 days.

The risk to the UK remains very low, where there have been no cases of Ebola transmission reported. The UK government is closely monitoring the spread of the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea. For people living outside Africa there is a very low threat and experts believe even if the virus did arrive in the UK it would be very unlikely to spread.

Travel restrictions and exit screening at airports are in place in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia; in Nigeria there is no evidence of wider transmission as controls are very tight. The Foreign Office is currently advising against all non-essential travel to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea and that travel into and from some of these countries is now limited.

**3. North West Kent College**

While the outbreak is considered to be very low risk in the UK, North West Kent College is liaising with the below authorities in order to monitor the changing situation:

- [Public Health England](#)
- Local Health Protection Team (Kent HPT)
- College Occupational Health Service (based at Darent Valley Hospital)
- Foreign office (for overseas travel advice)
- World Health Organisation (for ongoing Ebola updates)

**If there is any change to the current advice this information summary will be updated as and when required.**

A formal risk assessment has been completed (Appendix B)

**4. Advice for North West Kent College staff and students**

Staff and Students are asked to be aware of the following advice in the event that there may be students and staff travelling to and from Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone.

Students and staff arriving back in the UK having travelled from any of the affected countries who are free of symptoms, and are not infectious, should have no restrictions on their education or normal activities.

If an individual becomes unwell with fever chills and muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, sore throat or rash within 21 days of their return from an affected country, they may require urgent medical assessment. Please follow the advice provided at Appendix A.

Whilst awaiting further information or contacting the various authorities the staff or student member who is ill must be isolated from other staff and students in order to minimise the possible exposure until a Health Care professional arrives and takes command of the situation.

## **5. Environmental Cleaning Guidance**

Once a person with risk factors for Ebola becomes unwell in the UK, they will be admitted to a healthcare facility and will be tested rapidly, with a result available within 24 hours. There will be a number of areas which may have been contaminated with potentially infectious body fluids. The local Health Protection Team will undertake a risk assessment and provide advice and guidance to appropriate cleaning and waste management contractors and to the College. The following protocol should be followed:

### **Suspected cases**

Areas which may have been contaminated by body fluids, should not be used until a test result to confirm or exclude Ebola is available. Places which the suspected case has contaminated with body fluids (e.g. vomit, blood, faeces) should be cordoned off and urgent advice sought from the local Health Protection Team on **0344 2257968**. Places through which the case passed transiently, such as corridors, do not need special cleaning if there is no visible contamination with body fluids.

### **Cases medically assessed as not infected with Ebola**

These cases will either have been tested and found negative, or will have not met medical criteria for testing. No further special action needs to be taken for the waste and isolated objects. Body fluid spills should be cleaned and disinfected as per usual Facilities Department protocol. Waste can be disposed of as normal and objects cleaned as normal and used again.

### **Confirmed cases**

For confirmed cases, cleaning will be organised with the assistance of the local Health Protection Team using a specialist contractor.

## **6. Co-ordinating information and advice**

It is important that reliable information is gathered from across the College, not just in the unlikely situation that cases of Ebola occur in the North Kent area, but on any other significant effect of the outbreak - for example travel restrictions impacting on staff or students.

Staff who identify such difficulties, or who are concerned for the welfare of students or staff worried about friends and families in affected countries, are requested to ensure that the following people are informed:

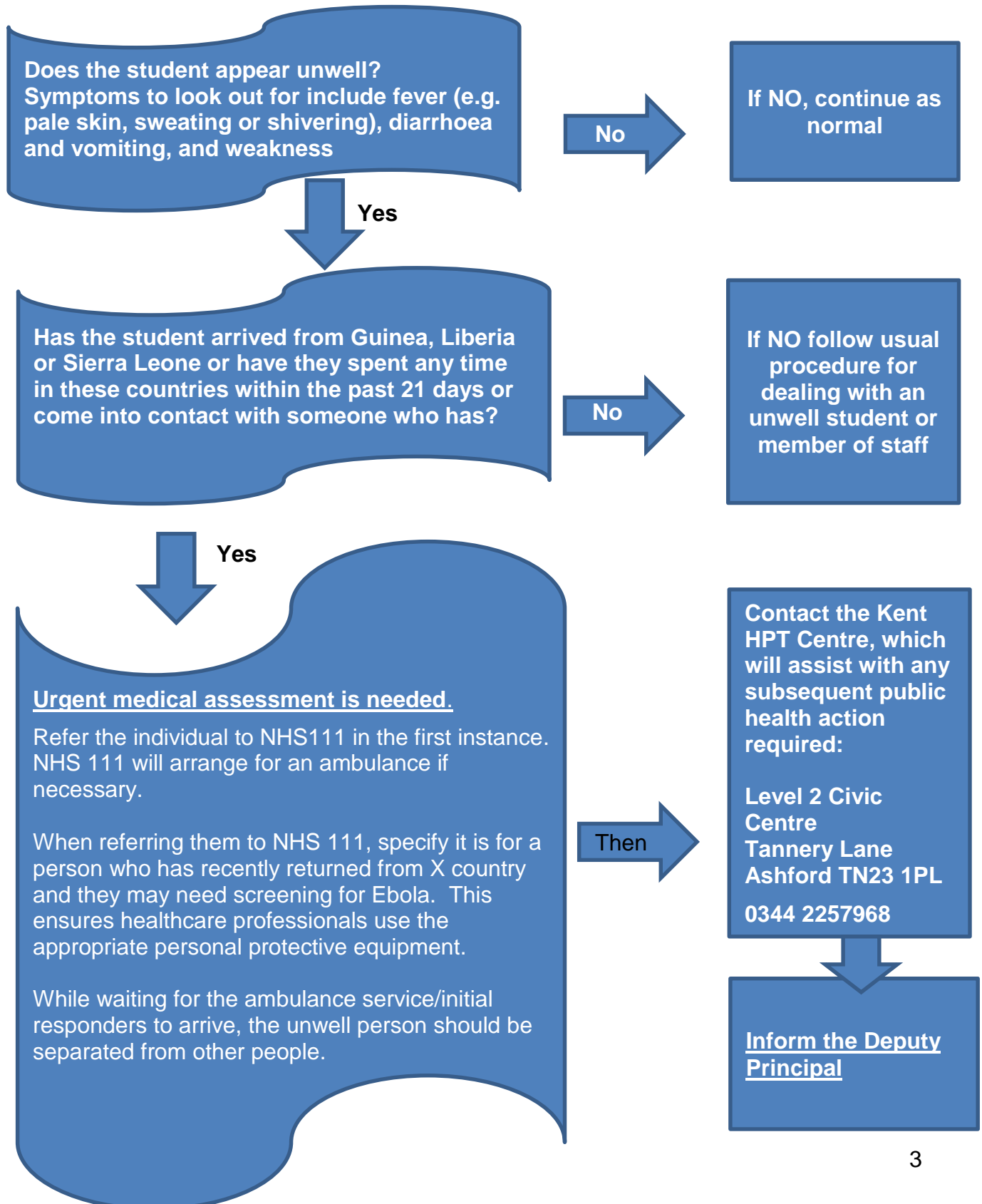
Students: Rhiannon Hughes  
Deputy Principal

Staff: Joanna Lewis  
HR Manager

**Appendix A: Ebola risk assessment in North West Kent College**

The below flowchart has been created to inform the assessment of unwell students and staff at the College. Following the advice will assist the public health response and ensure the appropriate organisations are informed. It is reiterated that the risk of a student or staff member developing Ebola is considered to be VERY LOW.

Note if the students or staff member is unable to respond to questioning you should follow the 'yes' route.



**Appendix B****College Wide Risk Assessment**

Assessed By: HR Manager 20 October 201

**Context:** Ebola is a rare but serious viral infection. Transmission of Ebola from person to person is by direct contact with blood and body fluids from an infected person. The spread of the virus is not airborne. The incubation period, the time between infection and symptoms appearing ranges from two to 21 days. The risk to the UK remains very low, where there have been no cases of Ebola transmission reported. The UK government is closely monitoring the spread of the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea. For people living outside Africa there is a very low threat and experts believe even if the virus did arrive in the UK it would be very unlikely to spread.

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how?	Severity	Existing controls	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Further controls required	Who Actioned?	Action Complete?	Revised Risk Rating
<b>Ebola Virus at NWKC</b>	<p>Staff and students and everyone associated with NWKC and locality: Ebola is potentially fatal.</p> <p>Transmission is currently limited to Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone but has occurred in health care settings more recently.</p> <p>Risk of transmission is low for travel and education settings as transmission is via direct contact with body fluids.</p> <p>It is noted that NWKC staff are not sufficiently competent to recognise or diagnose Ebola but can assess the visible signs of ill health and obtain relevant information through questioning.</p> <p>Usual hygiene such as hand washing may not remove the virus as it can survive for seven days on hard surfaces. Therefore equipment such as a gym or toilets pose a higher risk of transmission.</p> <p>First aiders who come into contact with people showing symptoms may be at a higher risk of transmission.</p> <p>The risk of a person contracting the virus from visiting West Africa is low and airports are operating exit screening.</p>	5	<p>Information, advice and support document drafted with actions to be taken.</p> <p>All staff to be made aware of information and advice and be vigilant about the situation as the likelihood of an infected member of staff or students is still low (30 October 2014).</p> <p>College First Aiders available via College Emergency Number: <b>2777 (01322 629 777)</b></p> <p>College First Aiders hold First Aid at Work Certificate and are trained in contamination control.</p>	1	5	<p>On-going regular monitoring of Government advice and links to appropriate local authorities.</p> <p>The Ebola situation is currently under constant review and the College will follow all Government advice.</p> <p>Following additional PPE to be purchased for First Aiders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face Masks;</li> <li>• Surgical Masks;</li> <li>• Aprons.</li> </ul>	Risk Manager		