

# NAA Ebola Communication Guidance to Affiliates

## Current Point of View

1. Refer most media and key stakeholder inquiries to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) resources at this time.
  - NAA, its affiliates and individual members are not health care professionals. Providing specific guidance (health tips), beyond general precautionary measures, is not advisable. The CDC and other qualified officials should provide this information.
2. Continue to monitor momentum in “higher risk industries” – such as travel/tourism, convention centers, shopping malls, sports arenas – to see if their efforts spur more definitive guidance from health officials.
3. If a resident is exhibiting symptoms of Ebola, do not direct janitorial or maintenance staff to the apartment. Immediately notify the local health department and contact CDC for guidance regarding appropriate measures to be taken by maintenance staff.

## Guidance on Media Calls

If you receive media calls, we recommend referring them to the CDC and health officials, who are better qualified to answer their questions at this time.

- Make sure your office has the proper contact information of the local health authority and/or the best CDC resources, to direct inquiries from local stakeholders.
- We recommend a statement such as:
  - “We appreciate your call. It is wise for everyone to stay safe and to remain current with the most-recent guidance provided by health officials. That is why we ask that you direct your question to [LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIAL] or the CDC, who are on top of this situation.”

## Other Key Messages to Consider

- We recommend that people take seriously the advice from the CDC and other officials on basic things you can do to remain safe. Some current advice from the CDC includes: Avoid direct contact with anyone exhibiting symptoms. Take extra precaution to avoid – or carefully manage – all bodily fluids such as blood, urine or feces, especially if these involve a person who is sick. Open window shades to areas that could benefit from more sunlight.
- We encourage everyone to keep current with advice from the CDC and public health officials on all the things you can do to remain safe.

## Potential Questions from Media / Residents

- *If someone in an apartment building is diagnosed with Ebola, will other residents become infected as well? What are the real risks?*
  - At the present time, the risk appears to be contained to people with direct contact with a symptomatic patient, or that person’s bodily fluids, such as vomit, blood and feces. We encourage you to visit the CDC website for updated information and safety precaution tips and we will provide you with any new information as it becomes available to us.
- *Is Ebola transmissible through coming in contact with contaminated surfaces like elevator buttons, stair railings and door knobs?*
  - Although most public health officials have publicly stated that Ebola does not survive on surfaces in “real-world settings,” it is always wise to use precaution. If you have any belief that your apartment has symptomatic people, try to avoid “common touch” areas by using a tissue or handkerchief. Also, wash your hands frequently.

- *What guidance should I offer custodial/janitorial staff, who sometimes have to clean up vomit or urine?*
  - We echo the public health officials by recommending an abundance of caution on these tasks. Ebola is most commonly transmitted through bodily fluids such as vomit, blood and feces. We encourage you to visit the CDC website for updated information and safety precaution tips and we will provide you with any new information, as it becomes available to us. If you suspect a resident has Ebola, contact the CDC for further guidance before advising staff on clean-up procedures.

### **Additional Questions You May Receive from Media/Residents**

- *Did the building owner and property management team work in collaboration with CDC to disinfect his apartment and any other parts of the building?*
- *What was done to isolate the virus to the patient's apartment?*
- *How was the patient's apartment cleaned and sanitized?*
- *How did the building owner and manager address sanitizing the public spaces of the building that the patient may have come in contact with?*
- *Is my apartment safe?*
- *I live on the same floor as he did – am I in danger of contracting Ebola from proximity?*
  - We understand your concerns. Your questions are best handled by the local health officials and/or the CDC for the most current information. Our understanding is that the building owner/manager are cooperating fully with CDC/local public health guidance and are taking all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of all residents. We encourage you to visit the CDC website for updated information and safety precaution tips. Based on current guidance, we can share that the risk appears to be contained to people with direct contact with a symptomatic victim, or that person's bodily fluids, such as vomit, blood and feces.

### **Fact Sheet**

If questions continually arise in a property, you may want to display the attached fact sheet prepared by the CDC, "Facts About Ebola in the U.S." in your management office and common areas. This can also be printed off of the CDC website at [www.cdc.gov/](http://www.cdc.gov/)

Facts About Ebola in the U.S.: [Click here](#)

**\*\*If you find you are involved in an Ebola case with a resident, please call NAA for further guidance\*\***