American Public Health Association

Public Relations Writing

Position Paper on Ebola

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The recent out break of Ebola in the United States has caused panic and fear among many people. The deadly disease made its way into the country though an American health care provider upon returning from West Africa while providing health care in the country. The doctor did not show signs and symptoms of the disease until four days after returning from West Africa. Thomas Eric Duncan was admitted to Texas Presbyterian hospital in Dallas on Sept. 28, and later died of Ebola on Oct. 8, 2014.

Ebola viruses are found in several African countries. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is where the virus originated. It was discovered near the Ebola River in 1976. The disease has had several outbreaks in Africa since being discovered. It is still unknown as to what the natural reservoir host might be. “However, on the basis of evidence and the nature of similar viruses, researchers believe that the virus is animal-borne and that bats are the most likely reservoir.” An animal native to Africa is the host to four of the five virus strains (Center for Disease Control and Prevention.)

Ebola, previously known as Ebola hemorrhagic fever, is a rare and deadly disease caused by infection with one of the Ebola virus strains. Ebola can cause disease in humans and nonhuman primates (monkeys, gorillas, and chimpanzees).

Ebola is caused by infection with a virus of the family “*Filoviridae*, genus *Ebolavirus*.” Of the five identified Ebola virus species, only four are known to cause disease in humans: “Ebola virus (*Zaire ebolavirus*); Sudan virus (*Sudan ebolavirus*); Taï Forest virus (*Taï Forest ebolavirus*, formerly *Côte d’Ivoire ebolavirus*); and Bundibugyo virus (*Bundibugyo ebolavirus*). The fifth, Reston virus (*Reston ebolavirus*), has not caused the diseases in humans, but has caused the disease in nonhuman primates”. (Center for Disease Control and Prevention)

The center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has many duties to keep Americans healthy. One of those responsibilities is implementing a strategic plan of action in the case of an outbreak of a deadly virus such as Ebola. The CDC is held very high in regards to preventing the spread of epidemics. The American Public Health Association (APHA) is taking a stand against the CDC’s response to this crisis and questioning the entire organization how this happened and stating why they have failed to prepare a system in the case of emergency, such as the one we are now facing. (Center For Disease Control and Prevention)

According to the article “Ebola has killed more than 200 doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers since June,” Ebola has now infected numerous people in America. The two nurses who treated Duncan ended up being the first cases in the U.S (Dan Diamond). “Duncan was admitted to the hospital on September 28, having traveled from West Africa and suffering from common Ebola symptoms like vomiting and diarrhea, the staff wasn’t told to wear protective gear to guard themselves against Ebola until September 30. That’s when tests formally confirmed that Duncan was infected with Ebola, and had been contagious for nearly a week.” (Diamond) In that time Duncan came in contact with over 70 health care workers who were taking care of him. All of these health care workers were not given proper instructions on how to care for someone with Ebola symptoms (Diamond).

The improper action by a nurse named Amber Vinson is the next big issue. Vinson was one of Duncans primary nurses. She began to feel ill a few days later and boarded an aircraft traveling from Cleveland Ohio to Dallas Texas. She told airport officials she was feeling ill and was still allowed to board the aircraft with 134 other passengers on board. President Obama also voiced his opinion about the CDC. He said teams from the federal Center for Disease Control must be “much more aggressive.”

“We want a rapid-response team, a SWAT team essentially, from the CDC to be on the ground as quickly as possible, hopefully within 24 hours” (USA Today Paper. Front Page. 10.16.14) The reason that the CDC needs to tighten up its infection safety plan is simple. If we don’t contain a virus of this magnitude it can have extremely negative consequences for this country. “ About one in every 25 patients get an infection while being treated in a U.S hospital, which translates to more than 700,000 hospital associated illnesses each year, according to the federal Disease Control and Prevention.” (USA Today Paper. Front page. 10.16.14) Patients who die from infections transmit the virus via contaminated equipment, rooms or caregivers.

The reason the fear is so high and this poses such a grave threat is because the Ebola virus is much more contagious and deadly than regular bugs or infections. If the number of deaths due to contaminated equipment is already close to 30,000 then that number would increase significantly due to the severity of Ebola.

West Africa now has multiple countries affected by Ebola making the 2014 epidemic the largest in history. The latest cases are the first in the history of the United States. Dr Thao from the Texas Presbyterian hospital said the Texas Health Resources Center’s hospitals were not properly equipped for a disease of this caliber (Texas Health Resources Center).

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention does have a documented prevention plan for people who plan to travel or are in an area of the world that has Ebola. The CDC also has a list of steps for nurses and doctors to follow if they happen to come in contact with a patient with Ebola. First and foremost hygiene is number one. Make sure to wash hands properly and use hand sanitizer. “Do not handle items that may have come in contact with an infected person’s blood or body fluids (such as clothes, bedding, needles, and medical equipment)”. “Avoid all funeral or burial rituals that might involve contact with a person’s body that has died from Ebola. Avoid all food from animals that may carry the disease. Avoid hospitals in West Africa where Ebola patients are being treated. The U.S. embassy or consulate is often able to provide advice on facilities.” After returning from Africa monitor yourself for 21 days and if and signs of Ebola develop seek immediate medical attention.

Healthcare providers are instructed to do the following: “Wear protective clothing, including masks, gloves, gowns, and eye protection. Practice proper infection control and sterilization measures. For more information, see ‘Infection Control for Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers in the African Health Care Setting.’ Isolate patients with Ebola from other patients. Avoid direct contact with the bodies of people who have died from Ebola. Notify health officials if you have had direct contact with the blood or body fluids, such as but not limited to, feces, saliva, urine, vomit, and semen of a person who is sick with Ebola. The virus can enter the body through broken skin or unprotected mucous membranes in, for example, the eyes, nose, or mouth” (Center for Disease Control and Prevention).

There are several ways the CDC got it wrong and did not provide enough information in the case of an outbreak. For one, the CDC does not have hospitals in the U.S specifically set up for foreign disease control. Dr. Michael Osterholm, an infectious disease epidemiologist at the University of Minnesota, said, “some hospitals have more experience with infectious diseases and consistently do drills in how to deal with biohazards.” If you were a burn unit patient, wouldn't you want to go to a burn unit?" he said.

Another huge mistake that the CDC made was not administrating the ‘buddy system’ for doctors and nurses. The idea is for a nurse who is about to do a procedure on a patient with Ebola has another nurse monitor with extreme caution from the time he or she puts the (PPE) on until the time he or she removes the (PPE) personal protective equipment. The "buddy system" has been effective in stopping other kinds of infections in hospitals (Cohent)

Texas Presbyterian hospital administered two unauthorized tests trying to save Eric Duncan: The insertion of a breathing tube, and giving kidney dialysis. Director of the CDC spoke on both of these tests. "Both of those procedures may spread contaminated materials and are considered high-risk procedures," he said. "I'm not familiar with any prior patient with Ebola who has undergone either intubation or dialysis." said Tom Frieden, director of the CDC. ( Cohent)

We propose that the CDC take action and begin further plans to stop Ebola. A few suggestions might be to cut off air travel to African counties until the disease becomes controlled. We also suggest that anyone who shows signs or symptoms of Ebola be quarantined in a designated Ebola unit. Also if possible to have regular staffed outbreak simulations to be ready in the case of any future outbreaks. Stop sending military personal to Africa. Secure the southern border. Closely monitor the northern border and all coastlines, including Alaska. Suspend visas from Ebola impacted countries. These are just suggestions we are giving in hopes that as a country we can try and stop the spread of this horrible disease.

Works Cited

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Jones, Charisse. “ Ebola fears invade workplace.” *U.S.A Today*. USA Today 16. Oct. 2014. Print.

Thoa, “how do you feel working at a texas hospital?” *Texas Health Resource Center.* Online Video clip. 15. Oct. 2014

# Readability Statistics of Entered Text

## Reading Levels

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flesch-Kincaid_Readability_Test) | Grade 9.0 |
| [Automated Readability Index](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Automated_Readability_Index) | Grade 10.3 |
| [Coleman-Liau](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coleman-Liau_Index) | Grade 11.2 |
| [Flesch Reading Ease](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flesch-Kincaid_Readability_Test) | 61.1/100 (plain English) |
| [Gunning fog index](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gunning-Fog_Index) | Grade 12.7 |
| [Laesbarhedsindex (LIX) Formula](http://www.oleandersolutions.com/lix.html) | 40.4 = school year 6 |
| [SMOG Index](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMOG_Index) | Grade 11.7 |
| Average grade level | Grade 11 (mean of above) |

## Sentence Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of characters | 1,187 |
| Number of words | 243 |
| Characters per word | 4.88 |
| Syllables per word | 1.51 |
| Number of sentences | 14 |
| Words per sentence | 17.4 |
| Number of short sentences | 6 (43%, 12 words or less) |
| Number of long sentences | 2 (14%, 27 words or more) |
| Number of paragraphs | 2 |
| Sentences per paragraph | 7.0 |
| Number of questions | 0 (0%) |
| Number of passive sentences | 9 (64%) |
| Longest sentence | 30 words long |
| Shortest sentence | 3 words long |

## Word Usage

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of [to be verbs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/To_be) | 12 |
| Number of [auxiliary verbs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auxiliary_verb) | 1 |
| Number of [conjunctions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammatical_conjunction) | 14 (6% of words) |
| Number of [pronouns](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pronoun) | 3 (1% of words) |
| Number of [prepositions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Preposition) | 37 (15% of words) |
| Number of [nominalizations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nominalization) | 4 |

## Sentence Beginnings

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [Pronouns](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pronoun) | 0 |
| [Interrogative pronouns](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interrogative_word) | 0 |
| [Articles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Article_%28grammar%29) | 6 |
| [Subordinating conjunctions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammatical_conjunction) | 0 |
| [Conjunctions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammatical_conjunction) | 0 |
| [Prepositions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Preposition) | 0 |