



Monday 3rd November 2014

STATEMENT: GLOBAL EYE BANKS RESPONSE TO THE EBOLA OUTBREAK

Due to the recent outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in West Africa over the past few months, members of the *Global Alliance of Eye Bank Associations (GAEBA)* have commenced collaboration and sharing of regional responses on the EVD - in relation to ocular tissue donation – to ensure global preparedness.

As response plans vary across the world, primarily due to the proximity to the EVD outbreak, the changes to the level of risk facing each country and the spread of the disease, the GAEBA therefore advise that all Eye Bank Managers and Medical Directors contact their closest regional Eye Bank Association (outlined on page 2), or the GAEBA, to ascertain local/regional exclusion and deferral criteria for EVD.

Key Points about EVD

- A person can remain infectious for up to 7 weeks as long as their blood and secretions contain the virus
- Symptoms include; sudden onset fever, intense weakness, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, impaired kidney and liver function and sometimes internal and external bleeding
- There is a higher concentration of the EVD within the blood, organs and tissues during the immediate death and recovery phase as the body excretes live and infective viruses
- Laboratory findings include low white blood and platelet count and elevated liver enzymes

Recommendations (Regional variations):

Immediate exclusion from donation

- All persons known/diagnosed with EVD are excluded from all donation

Deferred Donation

- Asymptomatic travellers or residents returning from an EVD affected area should be deferred from donation of cells, tissues and organs for 60 days after return, provided they have reported no EVD symptoms (e.g. undiagnosed febrile illness)
- Anyone with a confirmed EVD exposure (e.g. contact with infected person), cannot donate within 60 days of exposure or if being monitored for exposure, within 60 days of the commencement of the monitoring period
- While the long term effects of Ebola survivors are unclear, donation coordinators are advised to consider a 12 month deferral period following exposure.

For further information please contact: Heather Machin, Development Officer via:
heather.machin@unimelb.edu.au | T: +61 3 9929 8377 | F: +61 3 9929 8711 | M: +61 412 581 881



Regional Eye Bank Associations

- Association of Eye Banks of Asia: <http://www.eyebankingasia.org/>
- European Eye Bank Association: <http://www.europeaneyebanks.org/>
- Eye Bank Association of America: <http://www.restoresight.org/>
- Eye Bank Association of Australia and New Zealand: <http://www.ebaanz.org/>
- Eye Bank Association of India: <http://www.ebai.org/>
- Pan American Association of eye Banks: <http://www.apaboeyebanks.org/>

References and Further Information about EVD

- Technical Report. (October, 2014). Risk of transmission of Ebola virus via donated blood and other substances of human origin in the EU. *European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control*. October 2014. <http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/ebola-risk-transmission-via-donated-blood-substances-human-origin-october-2014.pdf>
- Centre for Disease Control (October, 2014). 2014 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa - Outbreak Distribution Map. <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/distribution-map.html>
- World Health Organization (October, 2014). Ebola Virus Disease. <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/ebola/en/>
- Donate Life-USA (October, 2014). Guidance regarding Ebola Virus Disease. (EVD)<http://transplantpro.org/guidance-regarding-ebola-virus-disease-evd/>
- Department of Health – Australia (October, 2014). Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreaks in West Africa - Important Information for Travellers, Patients and Consumers. [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/2974D69E347C60F6CA257D1E00106707/\\$File/ebola-travellers-patients-consumers.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/2974D69E347C60F6CA257D1E00106707/$File/ebola-travellers-patients-consumers.pdf)