

EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE INFORMATION

The Oklahoma Board of Nursing is providing the following information to all licensees in response to questions regarding nursing practice and the Ebola virus.

It is important that licensed nurses have sufficient training and equipment to protect them should a patient with the Ebola virus seek treatment where the nurse works. Nurses are familiar with taking precautions around patients with infectious diseases and recognize the training and planning required to properly protect the nurse and the patient with an infectious disease. If a licensed nurse believes there is insufficient planning, training/education, protective wear/equipment, or other safety issues, they are responsible for bringing those concerns to the attention of management best equipped to address the situation. Licensed nurses need to be adequately prepared to care for Ebola patients with limited risk to personal harm. Nurses should be an integral part of the solution-oriented, collaborative approach that includes other health care professionals, and state and federal organizations.

The Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act and Rules provide guidance to the licensed nurse and/or nursing supervisors in caring for or supervising the care of Ebola patients. The Act and Rules provide the following:

- A licensed nurse is to conform to the minimum standards of acceptable nursing practice to ensure that s/he does not expose a patient or other person to risk of harm;
- A licensed nurse shall not perform any act that jeopardizes a patient's life, health or safety; and shall not delegate or accept the delegation of a nursing function when the acceptance of the assignment could reasonably be expected to result in unsafe or ineffective patient care; and
- A licensed nurse shall act professionally; and shall not leave a nursing care assignment without properly advising appropriate personnel; and/or discriminate in the rendering of nursing services or patient care assignment.

The Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act, Rules and practice Guidelines should be utilized in making decisions regarding care for patients with the Ebola virus. The following can be viewed on the Board's website.

- Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act: 59 O. S. §567.8 <http://www.ok.gov/nursing/act4.html>
- Oklahoma Nursing Rules: OAC §485:10-11-1. <http://www.ok.gov/nursing/rules.html>
- Decision Making Guidelines <http://www.ok.gov/nursing/prac-decmak.pdf>
- Abandonment Statement <http://www.ok.gov/nursing/prac-aband.pdf>

Information may be the best safeguard in caring for the Ebola patient. For additional information and guidance the licensed nurse should frequently review the following websites:

Oklahoma State Department of Health website

http://www.ok.gov/health/Organization/Office_of_Communications/News_Releases/Situation_Updates/Surveillance_and_Preparedness_for_Ebola_Virus_Disease/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Ebola Website <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>

Should you need additional clarification, please contact Gina Stafford, Associate Director for Nursing Practice, at (405) 962-1840.