

A New Challenge, a Constant Mission

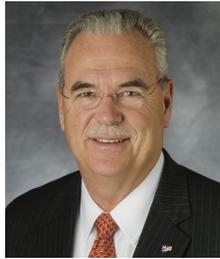
A Message from America's Hospitals

Readiness is a daily reality for America's hospitals, one of the cornerstones of their essential commitment to safeguard the health of patients, staff and the public. As a vital community resource, hospitals are at the center of every emergency that our nation may confront, from natural disasters to deadly diseases to biological warfare, terrorism and radiological and nuclear events. And we are constantly preparing for new threats.

Today, that readiness is being tested by a new foe: Ebola. Hospital leaders are joining forces with nurses, physicians and health officials at every level, as well as many other partners, to safeguard our communities.

What does that response look like?

As we've done with other emerging diseases like AIDS and SARS, health professionals are using new data, the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and lessons learned from those on the front lines to prepare, train staff and refine protocols. We are repeatedly drilling on the entire course of care, from diagnosis to final waste disposal—using the same equipment on which we will rely in order to safeguard staff, patients and communities—until those protocols are embedded in our muscle memory. And as we did with those other diseases, we will success-



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fully manage Ebola while protecting the health of our patients and health care workers.

Hospitals take very seriously the responsibility to communities to be there in emergencies. We understand that, as we learn more about Ebola, these protocols may change, and we are ready to adapt accordingly.

Preparedness is not a one-time investment. And it is not inexpensive. In an era where everyone wants to pay less and less for care, important priorities such as disaster preparedness that benefit all must be funded in a broad-based way. Being ready for the next pandemic, natural disaster or even terrorist attack is a process that calls for commitment to continual learning and training and swift adoption of new best practices and equipment. Much of hospital preparedness is not explicitly funded at the present time, but hospitals invest in it because it is the right thing to do and it is absolutely central to their core mission—safeguarding the health of every community.

A solution-oriented, collaborative approach to Ebola preparedness is essential to effectively manage the care of any future Ebola patients in the U.S. America's hospitals have a long and proud history of battling new diseases—and defeating them. And we are working together to defeat this one too.

America's hospitals are leading the way

To read more, go to: www.AHA.org



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