

Ebola in Canada: What have we learned from this outbreak that we didn't know before?

PLAZA C, SECOND FLOOR

The Ebola virus disease outbreak(s) in West Africa have raised several issues for public health and health care, especially with respect to infection prevention and control in health and other settings. The issues have ranged from world travel policy to personal protective equipment protocols. As with many similar public health events in the past (e.g., SARS, H1N1 influenza), the scientific foundations, valid and relevant surveillance data, estimates of risk and burden, effectiveness of interventions, principles and ethics, priorities and goals should provide the basis for evidence-informed, wise and fair decisions. These decisions may result in reaffirmation or change of policies, programs and practice and often have many consequences, including levels of preparedness and response, resource allocation, protocol changes, and specific education and advice for health practitioners and others working and living in the settings of everyday life. These, in turn, can be expected to affect attitudes and behaviour in society. What have we learned (or should we learn) from this outbreak that we didn't know (or should have known) before? To address these issues from a knowledge translation perspective, panel members will provide the stimuli for interactive responses from the audience and other members of the panel for what promises to be an engaging and educational event.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the scientific, practical, political and ethical considerations for policy and program decisions for a low-probability, high-consequence public health event in Canada.
- Debate the balance of roles and responsibilities of Canadian public health practitioners and health care providers between outbreak control in another country and preparedness/response at home.
- Assess how well we have learned lessons from previous outbreaks at home and abroad – and how well we have advanced our ability to apply those lessons.
- Identify what is new about the Ebola outbreak that requires new ways of thinking about public health preparedness and response in Canada and beyond.

Speakers:

- Eilish Cleary, Chief Medical Officer of Health, New Brunswick
- Paul Gully, Public Health Consultant; Adjunct Professor, School of Population and Public Health, University of British Columbia
- Bonnie Henry, Deputy Provincial Health Officer, Ministry of Health, British Columbia
- Michael Rekart, Clinical Professor, Medicine and Global Health, School of Population and Public Health, University of British Columbia
- Richard Schabas, Medical Officer of Health, Hastings and Prince Edward Counties
- Gregory Taylor, Chief Public Health Officer, Public Health Agency of Canada

Session Chair:

- Joel Kettner, President, Public Health Physicians of Canada

This panel is co-sponsored with PHPC by the National Collaborating Centre for Infectious Diseases, International Centre for Infectious Diseases