

Memo *from the Chairman and CEO*

October 24, 2014

Ebola Virus Update

Yesterday, it was confirmed that a doctor who recently returned to New York after treating Ebola patients in West Africa has fallen ill with the Ebola virus. The patient was taken to Bellevue Hospital after developing a fever and other symptoms. As has been widely reported, the patient, who lives in upper Manhattan, took several subway trips after his return to the United States on October 17, riding the 1, A, and L lines.

We are all understandably concerned that a fellow New Yorker has been diagnosed with this serious viral infection. We all have a lot of questions about the way that this virus is transmitted. Those MTA employees who come into contact with customers every day, or who are responsible for keeping our system clean, are particularly concerned about whether they are at higher risk.

The health commissioners of New York City and New York State have been very clear that the person diagnosed with Ebola was not contagious when he rode the subway. They have not recommended any additional regimen for cleaning subway cars, and there is no indication this patient emitted any bodily fluids while riding the subway.

As we move forward, please recall these basic facts about the Ebola virus provided by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health:

- Ebola is not a respiratory virus like a cold or flu and is not as easily spread as those infections. It is not transmitted through air (such as standing next to someone on a bus or train), water, or food.
- Ebola is spread only by contact with the bodily fluids of a contagious person, and the virus cannot live for more than a few hours on hard surfaces.
- Typical symptoms include fever, headache, muscle pain, weakness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and abnormal bleeding.

According to the CDC and other healthcare officials, you can protect yourself from Ebola by avoiding direct contact with the bodily fluids of anyone actively ill with Ebola, and if you cannot avoid such contact, adhering to established infection control procedures and the use of appropriate personal protective equipment. Also, as we enter cold and flu season, it is always a good idea to wash your hands frequently using soap and hot water or to use alcohol-based sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

We are committed to providing you with important medical information about the Ebola virus and risk of infection as well as appropriate protocols, training, and personal protective equipment for those with potential occupational risk. Infection-control policies and procedures are posted on your agency's intranet site. The CDC and the City and State Departments of Health are continually updating public information about Ebola. Although we will do our best to provide the most current information, we strongly recommend that you consult the following sources for the most recent medical advice about the Ebola virus:

- www.health.ny.gov
- www.cdc.gov

Thomas F. Prendergast
Chairman and CEO