

ACEP Ebola Expert Panel Consensus Statement on Restrictive Movement including Quarantine of Health Care Workers

November 13, 2014

Background:

Quarantine is a public health measure that restricts movement of individuals with the goal to protect the public health. As compared with *isolation* which involves the separation of persons who are symptomatic with a contagious infectious disease from healthy individuals, *quarantine* is for asymptomatic persons who may have been exposed and have the potential to transmit the disease to others. The current state of the science says that Ebola is not transmissible from person-to-person prior to the onset of symptoms. Imposing quarantine can have negative consequences such as deterring health care workers from treating an Ebola patient in the U.S. or from traveling to West Africa to assist with eradication of the disease at its source.

Consensus Statement:

The ACEP Ebola Expert Panel supports the statements of Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) that oppose mandatory quarantine of asymptomatic healthcare workers who have treated Ebola patients in the U.S. or have returned from caring for patients overseas in Ebola-affected areas. This panel respects the need for active sign and symptom monitoring of these individuals. The panel further supports continued application of rigorous science and application of evidence-based policies and procedures to prevent the spread of Ebola and encourages the application of simple modern technologic solutions to maximize public health and safety.

http://www.idsociety.org/2014_ebola_quarantine/

<http://www.shea-online.org/JournalNews/PressRoom/PressView/ArticleId/318/SHEA-Supports-Evidence-Based-Measures-to-Prevent-Ebola-Transmission-Opposes-Mandatory-Quarantine-for.aspx>