



McLean, VA – October 17, 2014 – Ebola Virus Requires Re-Evaluation of Pandemic Planning

Recently the CDC has announced several instances of health care workers contracting Ebola virus in the United States. The level of concern over this disease is clearly rising among the public. While it is premature to know whether the situation will develop into an outbreak, CRI believes that organizations should exercise effective pandemic planning right now. The health provider community has not dealt with Ebola virus inside the U.S. before. It is now apparent that standard protections have been either inadequate or improperly followed. In either case there have been flaws in the processes for protection of health workers. If infection controls prove to be inadequate, Ebola virus could spread quickly among communities along with a host of health and non-health related consequences. Even before a full outbreak, public concern over its spread could transform into panic as it did during the anthrax attack in 2001.

The resulting disruption to business operations usually hits hardest on the availability of key personnel, access to critical resources, and interrupted travel, causing an overall drop in productivity. Since the second Ebola patient travelled by commercial airline one day before reporting symptoms, that airline is already experiencing impact to its business. In addition, national markets quickly experienced a 2.5% decline largely associated with the Ebola situation. The CDC has reported that more cases are possible and has advised all health care providers across the U.S. to prepare for handling cases of Ebola virus.



Organizations have a responsibility to update their pandemic plans and include preparedness for the unique risk scenarios presented by the Ebola virus. CRI includes pandemic planning as one of its specialties – our plans assist organizations in establishing essential preparedness and countermeasures for major health-related emergencies. These critical functions include detecting symptoms, identifying response partners and external expertise, ensuring resilient communications, developing effective public and media messaging, ensuring transportation options, managing facility security, and training for decontamination techniques. For institutions to be fully prepared for a worst-case Ebola outbreak, their pandemic planning should include informed policy, best-practice procedures, and contingencies for all critical functions.

For further information on how CRI can assist you in upgrading your pandemic planning contact Mr. Robert Smith at either 703-867-6411 or rsmith@cri-solutions.com.