MARBURG UPDATE: NO NEW CASES, RESPONSE INTENSIFIED

Kampala - 01/11/2017 – In response to the Marburg outbreak, the Ministry of Health, with support from partners, has intensified its response within the affected Districts of Kween and Kapchorwa as well as the rest of the Sebei Sub-region.

A multi-sectoral team of experts has been dispatched to the affected districts to enhance the response.

Epidemiologists have been sent to conduct active case finding and tracing of people who have come into contact with confirmed cases across the Sebei Sub-region. The epidemiological team is also mapping health facilities to determine which staff require training in surveillance, including following up and verifying possible case alerts, monitoring the movement of confirmed cases and mapping all places where cases and contacts with cases have been.

Cross-border engagements with the Kenyan authorities are also taking place to boost cross-border surveillance efforts.

The multi-sectoral team also includes lab technologists who are collecting samples from suspected cases and ensuring safe and timely transportation of samples to the Uganda Virus Research Institute in Entebbe.

A case management team is also on stand-by to attend to any case admissions in on-site treatment units. A burial team to ensure the safe burial of any new cases has also been instituted and trained in proper burial practice to prevent the potential further spread of the outbreak.

Psychosocial support has been intensified to counsel individuals who have come into contact with the virus. The psychosocial team is offering counselling to family members of discharged patients as well as community members where discharged patients reside.
Communication and social mobilization experts are also carrying out door-to-door sensitization of communities, distributing posters and leaflets, holding community dialogues, and mobilizing opinion leaders in the affected districts, such as Members of Parliament and cultural and religious leaders, on how to best prevent the spread of the disease.

Water, sanitation and hygiene interventions have also been strengthened. Repairs have been made on the line for water to Kaproron in Kween district, while works are under way to connect Kaproron Health Center IV to the main grid. Sensitization on the importance of handwashing is also taking place.

The multi-disciplinary team of experts will remain on ground in Kapchorwa, Kween and the neighboring districts until the outbreak is fully contained.

The Ministry of Health is convening daily meetings with key partners to lead the response. Key partners in the response include: World Health Organization, Centre for Disease Control (CDC), AFENET, MSF, Red Cross, UNICEF, Uganda Virus Research Institute, PHFP, FHI and IDI.

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