Preparing for Ebola takes on added urgency in hospitals across the country following missteps in the handling of Thomas Eric Duncan in Dallas, Texas. Duncan was sent home from a hospital in September 2014, even though he told the staff he had contact with an Ebola patient in Liberia.

**Keywords**

Ebola, Outbreak, Virus, Hospitals, First Responders, Steps, Precautions, Thomas Eric Duncan, Thomas Duncan, Dallas, Texas Presbyterian Health, Emergency Medical System, Ambulances, Laboratories, Labs, Urgency, 911, Dispatchers, Paramedics, Travel, Daniel Nigro, FDNY, Fire Department of New York, Commissioner, New York, Cook County Health and Hospitals, Chicago, Emergency Rooms, EMT, Emergency Medical Technician, Patients, Flowchart, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, Symptom Flowcharts, Abigail Tumpey, Newark Airport, United Airlines, Quarantine, Plane, Travelers, West Africa, Populations, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Providence, Philadelphia, Washington DC, Howard University, Howard University Hospital, Flu Season, Influenza, Shelly McDonald-Pinkett, Worry, Safety, Fears, Deadly Disease, Disease, Ebola Virus Disease, EVD, Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever, EHF, Health, Contagious Diseases, Infectious Diseases, Communicable Diseases, Healthcare System
Transcript

Are U.S. Hospitals Prepared for Ebola?

BRIAN WILLIAMS, anchor:

All of this concern about Ebola has served as a kind of wakeup call to hospitals, health departments across this country determined not to repeat any of the mistakes we saw made in Dallas. We get that end of the story now from NBC's Tom Costello.

WOMAN: Okay. She is having a headache and eye pain.

TOM COSTELLO, reporting:

On the front lines of the nation's emergency medical system from ambulances to hospitals, clinics, to laboratories, Ebola has suddenly taken on added urgency. In New York, 911 dispatchers are now asking callers if they've been to West Africa. Paramedics given extra training.

DANIEL NIGROW (FDNY Commissioner): This will allow us to get a heads that someone possibly has been exposed to the Ebola virus.

COSTELLO: In metro Chicago, Cook County Health And Hospitals have sent this notice to ERs, EMTs and labs on evaluating patients for Ebola. For months, the CDC has been sending Ebola symptom flowcharts to five thousand hospitals nationwide. Now with the Dallas case in the news, Ebola is suddenly very real.

ABBIGAIL TUMPEY (Centers for Disease Control): We are hearing from, for example, different clinical groups this week that they don't really feel prepared. They have more questions. They have concerns.

COSTELLO: There is confusion at Newark Airport this weekend as passengers on a United Flight from Brussels were kept on board for two hours as the CDC responded to a man with Ebola-like symptoms.
MAN: They clearly were frankly made it up as they went along.
COSTELLO: Were you concerned at any point that this was something more serious?
MAN: No. I just thought it was incompetent.
COSTELLO: Thankfully, no Ebola, but the CDC is closely watching several cities with large West African populations; Los Angeles, Dallas, Minneapolis, Providence, New York, Philly, and Washington including a patient at Howard University Hospital last week who was quickly assessed and cleared. The chief medical officer says she's more worried about flu season than Ebola.
DR. SHELLY MCDONALD-PINKETT (Howard University Hospital): There are thousands of patients who die every year of influenza, but we don't have the same kind of concerns about the influenza that we have about Ebola.
COSTELLO: Since July 14th, hospitals nationwide have reported one hundred thirty-five instances to the CDC of people thought to be potential Ebola patients because of their symptoms and their travel histories; forty of those in just the last week but so far only the Dallas case has proven to be the real thing, Brian.
WILLIAMS: All right. Tom Costello from our DC newsroom tonight. Tom, thanks.