Responding to the Ebola Virus Disease at Point of Entry: Experience from Mumbai-India

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Abstract

Background

On August 8, 2014, the WHO declared the Ebola outbreak in West Africa a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEICs). The Government of India took the threat of EVD seriously and heightened the surveillance and tracking mechanisms at national and state levels for early detection of cases.

Method

International airports were put on high alert. C S I airport is the primary international airport serving the Mumbai Metropolitan Area, India. It is the busiest airport handling more than 780 aircraft movements per day and more than 30,000 passengers arrive to C S I Airport, Mumbai daily. Screening of passengers arriving to C S I airport, Coordination with stakeholders and mobilization of manpower was done. APHO Mumbai is nodal organization to coordinate the PHEIC activities at C S I Airport.

Present paper describes the experience of APHO Mumbai in implementation of EVD containment activities at airport and lessons learned.

Results

During Ebola Activity period (August 2014 to October 2015) a total of 67,164,475 international passengers arrived to C S I Airport. Out of these 10,304 (0.15%) passengers were of category-1, 9 passengers were of category-2. No passenger was from category-3.

Conclusion

Coordination with various stakeholders, deployment of qualified contractual workers of manpower and dealing with passengers were the major challenges faced. Risk communication at every point of time to the passengers and stakeholders were excellent.
Keywords

EVD, PHEIC, Point of Entry, Risk communication, C S I Airport and APHO Mumbai.