



News Release

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Washington receives federal grant for Ebola/infectious diseases response

Spokane-area hospital serves as regional treatment center for four northwest states

OLYMPIA — A five year federal grant announced today will help prepare the Pacific Northwest’s regional Ebola treatment center to better manage potential cases of Ebola and patients with other infectious diseases.

The state Department of Health will use the first-year grant totaling \$2.4 million to help build capability for managing cases of highly infectious diseases like Ebola at Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center & Children’s Hospital in Spokane. The Spokane medical center is the designated response center for federal Region X — Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska.

Readiness for highly infectious disease cases is a priority for state health officials in the four-state region. Under the grant and the agreement between Washington health officials and Providence Sacred Heart, the medical center will work closely with emergency medical services and other regional medical facilities to be continuously ready to care for patients with highly infectious diseases. Providence Sacred Heart will establish a designated 10-bed isolation unit with separate access to ensure safety for all patients and caregivers.

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services has chosen nine regional “[Ebola and special pathogen treatment centers](#),” including Providence Sacred Heart.

The dedicated regional treatment centers will serve in a similar way to Emory University and Nebraska Medical Center, which recently cared for patients from the U.S. as well as patients medically evacuated from overseas.

Enhanced readiness for highly infectious diseases under the grant will also improve capacity to respond to other public health and medical risks in the state and regionally. The Washington

State Department of Health will work with Providence Sacred Heart and the other states in Region X to develop plans and agreements for patient coordination and transfer.

“The increasing international mobility of the population is leading to more rapid spread of infectious diseases like Ebola and, more recently, MERS”, says Jeff Collins, Chief Medical Officer of Providence Health Care. “Funding support from the Department of Health and Human Services is an important investment to ensure our region’s health care system is ready to safely and successfully identify, isolate and treat patients with infectious disease while protecting caregivers, other patients and the community at large.”.

Providence Sacred Heart was selected for the grant in part because it has well-established local, regional, and state partnerships in place. It works in collaboration with a variety of agencies to routinely manage infectious diseases in the community. It is the largest hospital between Seattle and Minneapolis with a full spectrum of advanced services and nationally renowned specialists onsite. The medical center participated in the State of Washington Ebola readiness activities, including Ebola readiness surveys conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Department of Health & Human Services.

The federally funded project is building a national network of special pathogen treatment centers. The grant covers five years, starting with \$2,426,787 in year one to be followed by smaller grants in years two-through-five, totaling \$3.25-\$4.6 million. The grant is part of emergency funding appropriated by Congress stemming from Ebola cases in the U.S. in the 2014 West Africa Ebola epidemic.

The additional work on readiness for highly infectious diseases will support existing plans and systems in our state and the region. State health officials in Washington have been tracking [the Ebola situation](#) and monitoring travelers who’ve come from the affected regions in Africa.

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