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## **UNMC/Nebraska Medicine designated as National Ebola Training and Education Center**

*One of three U.S. centers which will share \$12 million HHS grant*

The University of Nebraska Medical Center/Nebraska Medicine, in collaboration with Emory University in Atlanta and Bellevue Hospital Center in New York City, have been awarded a \$12 million grant by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish and co-lead the nation's National Ebola Training and Education Center (NETEC).

The three academic institutions will partner with the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support the training of health care providers and facilities on strategies to manage Ebola and other emerging infectious diseases.

UNMC and its primary clinical partner, Nebraska Medicine, will receive \$5.1 million of the \$12 million federal grant – the largest share of the three collaborating institutions.

"We are pleased to receive this designation as a national leader in the world's fight against Ebola and other infectious diseases," said Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D., UNMC chancellor and advisory board chair for Nebraska Medicine. "Our campus is in this position because we have selfless, talented individuals who prepared for a decade to care for the sickest of patients in our biocontainment unit. They did so valiantly over several months in 2014, and they also have shared their expertise to train countless others from around the world in preparation for the next highly infectious disease outbreak.

"I also want to thank our state's congressional delegation for their support and work in helping us receive this significant designation."

During the Ebola outbreak of 2014, UNMC/Nebraska Medicine was recognized as a national asset and referred to as the "gold standard" for treatment and development of safety protocols to handle Ebola and highly infectious diseases.

UNMC/Nebraska Medicine has the largest operational biocontainment unit in the nation.

"This grant is a remarkable opportunity for the University of Nebraska Medical Center to share the innovative and proven strategies their medical professionals have used to treat Ebola patients," said Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts. "Through this grant, Ebola assessment hospitals across the United States will be able to see why many are calling UNMC and Nebraska's medical professionals the 'gold standard' for treating this deadly epidemic."

UNMC/Nebraska Medicine and Emory University have worked with the CDC since December to train more than 460 health care workers from 87 health care systems, including 37 designated Ebola treatment centers, on all aspects of infection control and patient care for individuals with Ebola.

UNMC and Emory are offering additional training opportunities this summer for up to 400 staff from Ebola assessment hospitals.

The new National Ebola Training and Education Center will expand on the success of this initial work and offer state health departments and health care facilities additional access to the clinical expertise and training capabilities offered by these institutions.

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“The national center contributes to our nation’s health security by developing and teaching evidence-based practices of experienced providers and health care institutions in caring for patients with Ebola and other serious infectious diseases,” said Nicole Lurie, M.D., assistant secretary for preparedness and response for HHS. “While this training starts with Ebola, it also will help the health care community deal with other serious infectious diseases in the future.”

CDC Director Tom Frieden, M.D., said the ongoing Ebola epidemic in West Africa is proof “that a threat anywhere can be a threat everywhere; the United States must continue to prepare.

“Hospitals are often the first place where a new disease threat is recognized. This new center will help our hospitals and health care workers prepare to handle new threats and safely care for patients.”

Phil Smith, M.D., medical director of the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit at Nebraska Medicine and professor, UNMC College of Public Health, is principal investigator of the UNMC/Nebraska Medicine grant.

UNMC/Nebraska Medicine is one of nine regional Ebola treatment centers recently named by HHS as part of a national network of 55 Ebola treatment centers with enhanced capabilities to treat patients with confirmed Ebola or other highly infectious diseases.

Ebola treatment centers are staffed, equipped and have been assessed to have current capabilities, training and resources to provide the complex treatment necessary to care for a person with Ebola while minimizing risk to health care workers.

## **What others are saying:**

“Nebraska is leading the nation in health research and treatment. Today’s designation by HHS shows that the men and women of UNMC have achieved remarkable advancements in the fight against dangerous diseases. Congratulations to Chancellor Gold and the staff of UNMC on this well-deserved achievement.” – **Nebraska Sen. Deb Fischer**

“The University of Nebraska Medical Center/Nebraska Medicine demonstrates leadership and commitment to public health preparedness and patient care. UNMC is uniquely qualified to provide training and education so health professionals are prepared to treat patients with Ebola and other infectious diseases. Omaha is proud to be in the forefront of this national health care initiative.” – **Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert**

“Infectious diseases can lead to outbreaks that disrupt families and communities, and this National Ebola Training and Education Center will ensure a highly trained health care workforce resulting in optimal health outcomes for everyone, but especially for the citizens of Nebraska.” – **Adi M. Pour, Ph.D., director, Douglas County Health Department**

“This designation is a testament to the commitment, dedication and teamwork between the University of Nebraska Medical Center/Nebraska Medicine and partners. It solidifies Nebraska’s role as a national leader in managing and treating highly infectious diseases. Now even more health care providers and facilities will benefit from their knowledge and expertise.” – **Courtney Phillips, CEO, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services**

“Congratulations to UNMC for being named a National Ebola Training and Education Center. This designation exemplifies the diligent work and dedication UNMC has in fighting deadly infectious diseases. Nebraska Medicine’s continued excellence and leadership in the fight against Ebola make it an ideal site for this important public health program. For ten years, UNMC has prepared for the outbreak of diseases, such as Ebola, through the construction of its biocontainment unit, and rise to prominence in treating patients infected with Ebola during last year’s outbreak. The NETEC will allow UNMC to continue pioneering the study and containment of infectious disease, help establish best practices for combating infectious diseases nationwide, and further solidify Nebraska as a leader in research and innovation.” – **Nebraska Congressman Brad Ashford**

***We are Nebraska Medicine and UNMC. Our mission is to lead the world in transforming lives to create a healthy future for all individuals and communities through premier educational programs, innovative research and extraordinary patient care.***