ED, Acute Care, and Lassa Fever: Identify, Isolate, and Inform

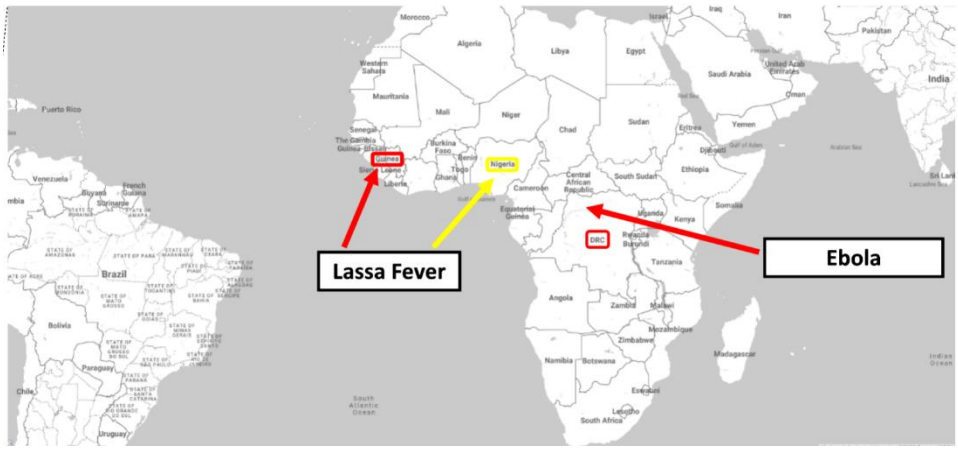
Additional Resources

The following resources were shared during the live session:

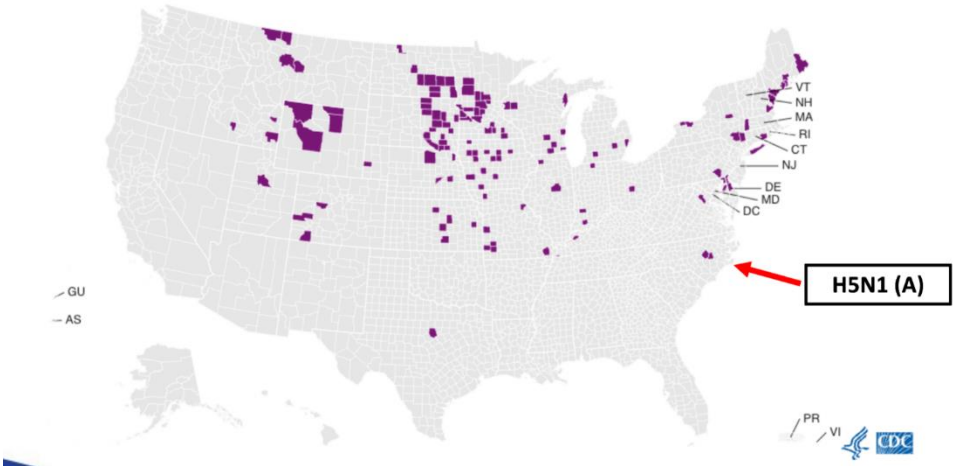
- Post session resources (podcast of webinar, presentation slides, responses to unanswered questions) can be found on our website next week:
  - https://med.emory.edu/departments/medicine/divisions/infectious-diseases/serious-communicable-diseases-program/covid-19-resources/access-past-echo-recordings.html
- Register for upcoming sessions on our website:
  - https://med.emory.edu/departments/medicine/divisions/infectious-diseases/serious-communicable-diseases-program/covid-19-resources/echo-upcoming-session.html
- GDPH has a great travel screen website…all you need to do is type in the country where the individual traveled. A list of recent outbreaks and relevant epi facts are then populated.
  - Check it out at https://dph.georgia.gov/TravelClinicalAssistant
- Here is a map with contacts for the regional treatment centers:
  - https://netec.org/about-netec/partners-regional-contacts/#regional-contacts
- Upcoming Project Echo Session:
  - https://med.emory.edu/departments/medicine/divisions/infectious-diseases/serious-communicable-diseases-program/covid-19-resources/echo-upcoming-session.html
- In the state of Georgia, if you have any concerns about a highly infectious/special pathogen, please notify Georgia Department of Public Health:
  - 1-866-PUB-HLTH!
- This is a hot-of-the-press article, "Lassa Virus Infection: a Summary for Clinicians" from NETEC that attendees may find high-yield:
  - https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35395384/
- National Emerging Special Pathogens Training and Education Center:
  - https://netec.org/
- By reaching out to NETEC, if you are part of Region 4, Emory should be part of your planning process. We look forward to partnering with you!!
  - https://netec.org/consulting-services/

Session Recap:

- **Situation Report**



  - First Pathogen of Concern – Lassa Fever.
    - Lassa fever continues to spread in Nigeria; however, new cases have **not** been reported in Europe or the United States at this time.
    - April 22, 2022 – the Guinea Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene declared a new Lassa Fever outbreak in their country after the confirmation of a case in a 17-year-old patient.
  - Second Pathogen of Concern – Ebola Virus Disease (EVD).
    - April 23, 2022 - Republic of the Congo declared a new EVD outbreak. A 31-year-old man died in the northwestern province of the country with confirmed disease. On April 5, 2022, the patient reportedly began experiencing symptoms. From what we know, the patient was vaccinated in 2020 and genomic sequencing revealed that the virus represented a new spillover event. The WHO reports that a rapid ring vaccination strategy is underway. This is the third outbreak in the province since 2018.



- Third Pathogen of Concern: H5N1 otherwise known as highly pathogenic avian influenza, a Type A bird flu virus.
    - Type A viruses do not normally infect people, and **no human cases** have ever been detected or reported in the US.
    - Between January 2022 and April 25, 2022, there have been 235 reported outbreaks of H5N1, with 29 states affected, and 131 counties affected. In Region IV, nine outbreaks have been reported in NC domestic birds in commercial turkey processing plants. Region IV, the SRDRS, and the CDC are closely monitoring the situation.

- **Session Reminders**
    - Recognizing a Lassa Person Under Investigation (PUI)
        - A PUI is recognized through uniformed criteria such as signs and symptoms and epidemiological risk factors (travel during incubation, exposures, etc.). A patient that presents with symptoms, who travelled to an area with Lassa Fever (such as Nigeria) is more likely to have the disease than an individual with symptoms that has not travelled outside of the United States.
    - Identify, Isolate, and Inform
        - Identification of a PUI consists of screening all patients for the disease immediately upon arrival – reducing the risk of transmission. Providing entry signage in multiple languages enables patients to self-identify. It is important to consider what a patient might touch or encounter upon arrival at the medical facility.
        - Isolation consists of physically separating PUI's from others, allowing for containment of the pathogenic organism. It is important to prepare isolation rooms in advance, ensuring that the room only contains items that need to be present. When rooming a PUI, healthcare personnel should identify routes that minimize exposure. Masking and the use of provider personal protective equipment are also critical in reducing risk. These actions break the chain of infection – preventing transmission of the organism from patient to a new susceptible host.

        - It is critical to inform the proper internal departmental staff with detailed exposure risk history upon identifying and isolating a PUI. These contacts generally consist of an infectious disease specialist or infection control (as they will provide guidance in diagnosing and caring for the patient), nursing and medical leadership of your ED, public safety, environmental services, laboratory, administration, and public relations. In terms of external communication, you may need to communicate with EMS or transport, specialty services, and public health.
    - <u>Pediatrics and Lassa Fever: Identify, Isolate, Inform</u>
        - In terms of identification, clinical presentation is similar to that of adults, including nonspecific febrile illness and history of travelling to an endemic region.
        - When focusing on isolation, viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) precautions should be taken, which includes limiting caregivers to minimize the risk of disease transmission.
        - As mentioned, communication is critical when caring for a PUI. It is critical to inform hospital infection control, public health, and regional pediatric infectious disease experts. Providers can consult pediatric experts via the Children Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) Transfer Center by calling 404-785-KIDS.