

## STATE OF WASHINGTON

### DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission P.O. Box 47864 Olympia, WA 98504-7864  
October 16, 2014 The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission recognizes and understands that nurses and the public are fearful related to the Ebola outbreak. Our thoughts are with those infected and their families. Dr. John Wiesman, the Secretary of the Washington State Department of Health, routinely updates the Department of Health <<http://www.doh.wa.gov/>> website. Please visit the website for the most current and accurate information on Ebola.

1. The Nursing Commission office is receiving questions about nurses refusing to provide care for a patient with Ebola and whether this would be considered patient abandonment. Refusing to accept a patient assignment is an employer-employee issue, but is not a violation of conduct. The Nursing Commission does not have authority regarding employer-employee issues. Patient abandonment is considered a violation of nursing conduct. The Nursing Commission developed an interpretive statement defining patient abandonment: Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission-Patient Abandonment Interpretive Statement <<http://www.doh.wa.gov/portals/1/Documents/6000/PatientAbndmt.pdf>>

2. The most important thing for nurses and the public is to BE INFORMED and get information from reliable sources. Nurses should always follow recommended blood-borne pathogen exposure processes and procedures. Safety of the patient, nurse and public is critical. Information and updates may be found at:  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-Ebola Update <<http://www.cdc.gov/>>  
Washington State Department of Health-Ebola Information <<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Ebola>>  
National Institutes of Health Medline Plus-Ebola <<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ebola.html>>  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration-Ebola <[https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/ebola/control\\_prevention.html](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/ebola/control_prevention.html)>  
World Health Organization <<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/ebola/en/>>

The CDC has the following tools to help keep the public informed:

CDC Email

Updates <[https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCDC/subscriber/new?topic\\_id=&origin=http://blogs.cdc.gov/cdcdirector/](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCDC/subscriber/new?topic_id=&origin=http://blogs.cdc.gov/cdcdirector/)>

CDC Facebook <<https://www.facebook.com/CDC>>

CDC Twitter <<https://twitter.com/cdcgov>>

3. Healthcare providers and/or facilities must immediately notify their local health department of suspected or confirmed cases at Washington State Notifiable Conditions <<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/NotifiableConditions/ListofNotifiableConditions>>.

4. The Nursing Commission consultants and advisors are not experts in Ebola but we can help provide resources and information from reliable sites. The Nursing Commission recommends reviewing facility infection control policies and procedures and work with your infection control program to provide training and guidance.