

# CDC Collaborates to Prepare Children's Hospitals for Ebola

Ensuring U.S. hospitals were prepared for Ebola-related situations was a major component of CDC's domestic Ebola response. CDC sent Rapid Ebola Preparedness teams across the U.S. to train and prepare hospitals for the possibility of treating a patient sick with Ebola—including a pediatric patient. To date, no children's hospital in the U.S. ever treated a child with Ebola. Suddenly, they had to develop specific protocols and procedures to address the heightened concerns related to infection control. Planning efforts raised questions about topics specific to children, such as parental presence at the bedside, and hospitals discovered new challenges as they implemented these plans with pediatric patients with symptoms that could be from Ebola (i.e., persons under investigation).

As questions began to rise, the Ebola response Children's Health Team saw an opportunity for collaboration and shared learning.

They established regular Children's Hospital Collaboration Calls. These calls were held every other week during the height of the domestic response. Officials from 40 hospitals in 19 states and the District of Columbia were invited to participate on each call. As awareness of the calls spread, local and state health departments began to participate to better support local children's hospitals.

Discussion topics included guidance for persons under investigation, sustainability of Ebola readiness, and all-hazards preparedness. The calls were well-received and participation grew over the course of the response. Participants reported that CDC's information helped them prepare for both treating a child with Ebola and expanding their general preparedness plans. In the future, the Children's Health Team looks to create a long-lasting network among CDC and children's hospitals throughout the country.



*Andi Shane, MD, Associate Professor of Pediatric Infectious Disease for Emory University and Medical Director of Hospital Epidemiology for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.*



*"Thank you again for all of your efforts to ensure that pediatric hospitals are represented in Ebola planning and response. We are so grateful for CDC's commitment to children," Andi Shane, MD.*