Ebola: Containing an Epidemic

Problem

The 2014 Ebola outbreak is the largest that the world has ever seen. How do we contain an epidemic of this size and severity?

Goals and Predictions

- Come up with reasonable fixes to the areas of breakdown in the current containment strategies.
- Ultimately, wipe out the Ebola Virus and eradicate the current outbreak from Western Africa.

Current Containment System

- The International Community must have a response plan for Global Health Crises. The responsibility for this undertaking would fall to the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Balanced effort - use all containment strategies equally.
- The foundation of all plans must be community involvement through trusted sources.
- The WHO needs to create an emergency fund to deal with future health care crises.

What Needs to Change

- The hospital staff would provide the lab work for diagnoses.
- Anthropologists would be a member of this team under reviewed containment strategies.
- Information - An efficient information team is key to the successful containment of Ebola. All containment methods being with the cooperation of locals, which means that being able to spread information through trusted sources is foundational.

Division of Labor

- Hospital Staff: Trains locals for extra hospital help and manages known cases of Ebola. The hospital staff would also provide the lab work for diagnoses.
- Field Work: Provides safe and dignified burial for those who do not survive the disease. They also find new cases based on contact lists of known patients and trace those individuals to find those new cases. Anthropologists would be a member of this team under reviewed containment strategies.
- Information: An efficient information team is key to the successful containment of Ebola. All containment methods being with the cooperation of locals, which means that being able to spread information through trusted sources is foundational.

Duties of Each Group

- Hospital Staff
- Field Work
- Information

Ebola Incubation Diagram

- WHO needs to create an emergency fund to deal with global health issues.
- Containment of Ebola must be better organized so everyone remains efficient.
- Information and connection to local populations must be first priority in treating Ebola epidemics.

Conclusion

- In order to successfully eradicate Ebola in Western Africa we need to change how we approach containment.
- With out aggressive containment Ebola could become endemic to Western Africa and a potential global health threat.
- The WHO needs to be better equipped to respond to global health emergencies.

Miscellaneous Needs

- Due to the communication problems in developing countries teams must be decentralized and self sufficient.
- Hospitals must be able to triage their patients and keep those who are most sick in separate areas. Also needed are the involvement and training of local medical staff to provide long term care.
- Rebuild Health Care Systems of affected countries. For the benefit of patients with other illnesses including Malaria, Tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS- health care systems need international funding to rebuild and improve.
- Continued research into treatments, vaccines and tests for the Ebola Virus Disease must continue to prevent future health care crises.

Works Cited

- "What We Do." WHO. World Health Organization, 17 Apr. 2015. Website