

Infectious Disease Notifications

Effective: 10/25/2022

PURPOSE

To ensure a safe response and timely transport of a patient suspected of an infectious disease of public health concern to an appropriate receiving hospital.

BACKGROUND

Patients with infectious diseases can be found anywhere, however, patients infected with diseases of public health concern (who require special PPE and high-level isolation) can be expected to present to Boston EMS following international travel. Two likely scenarios where a patient suspected of an infectious disease of public health concern may present to Boston EMS are:

- An EMS response is requested by the CDC Quarantine Station at Logan Airport; Boston Public Health; or Massachusetts Public Health; or
- Crews responding to a 9-1-1 response, assess a patient and based on the impression, the patient may have a suspected infectious disease of public health concern.

The CDC Boston Quarantine Station is often made aware of these patients through communication from MassPort and/or FAA channels, and such patients are typically transported to MGH as the designated special pathogens hospital for clinical evaluation and care. Since the receiving hospital requires sufficient time to suit up staff in appropriate PPE and prepare an isolation room to receive the patient, communication at the earliest point with the hospital is essential to let them prepare for EMS arrival.

POLICY

1. Upon an impression of suspected infectious disease of public health concern or notification by the CDC or other reliable source, such as BPHC or MDPH, of such patient members should comply with PPE guidance.
2. If the concern for communicable infectious disease is suspected on call processing. Call taker will include that information in the CAD and make responding units aware with the phrase 'please look at comments for the call'.
3. The following subsequent notifications will be made:
 - 3.1 Dispatch OPS will notify the receiving hospital (MGH for patients from Logan Airport), MD1 and the Shift Commander of the suspected disease, ETA, and other pertinent information.
 - 3.2 The first arriving unit, after making contact shall notify the receiving hospital that they have a patient with a suspected disease of public health concern, and relay pertinent patient information including presenting symptoms and if a specific infectious disease is suspected, and an approximate ETA. Notification may be via CMED or through the turret using the ring-down phone. This notification should be made as soon as possible and well before transport is initiated. The usual pre-

arrival CMED notification of the ED via CMED will be made afterwards when the unit begins transport.

3.3 These notifications will be made regardless of notifications made by other agencies.

3.4 If a unit arrives at the airport and encounters a patient with a suspected infectious disease of public health concern, the CDC Boston Quarantine Station should be notified if they are not aware of the patient.

4. The BPHC Infectious Disease Bureau (IDB) provides a 24/7 number, 617-534-5611, should their support be needed. Likewise, BPHC IDB should be notified following the transport of a patient suspected of an infectious disease of public health concern.