

## **Infection Control Drill: To Assess the Readiness and Preparedness of Staffs in Managing Suspected Ebola Patients in Tan Tock Seng Hospital Emergency Department**

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**Abstract :** Introduction: The recent outbreak of Ebola virus disease in the west Africa has drawn global concern. With a high fatality rate and direct human-to-human transmission, it has spread between countries and caused great damages for patients and family who are affected. Being the designated hospital to manage epidemic outbreak in Singapore, Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) is facing great challenges in preparation and managing of potential outbreak of emerging infectious disease such as Ebola virus disease. Aim: We conducted an infection control drill in TTSH emergency department to assess the readiness of healthcare and allied health workers in managing suspected Ebola patients. It also helps to review current Ebola clinical protocol and work instruction to ensure more smooth and safe practice in managing Ebola patients in TTSH emergency department. Result: General preparedness level of staffs involved in managing Ebola virus disease in TTSH emergency department is not adequate. Knowledge deficits of staffs on Ebola personal protective equipment gowning and degowning process increase the risk of potential cross contamination in patient care. Loopholes are also found in current clinical protocol, such as unclear instructions and inaccurate information, which need to be revised to promote better staff performance in patient management. Logistic issues such as equipment dysfunction and inadequate supplies can lead to ineffective communication among teams and causing harm to patients in emergency situation. Conclusion: The infection control drill identified the need for more well-structured and clear clinical protocols to be in place to promote participants performance. In addition to quality protocols and guidelines, systemic training and annual refresher for all staffs in the emergency department are essential to prepare staffs for the outbreak of Ebola virus disease. Collaboration and communication with allied health staffs are also crucial for smooth delivery of patient care and minimising the potential human suffering, properties loss or injuries caused by disease. Therefore, more clinical drills with collaboration among various departments involved are recommended to be conducted in the future to monitor and assess readiness of TTSH emergency department in managing Ebola virus disease.

**Keywords :** ebola, emergency department, infection control drill, Tan Tock Seng Hospital

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