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NAMC/G1/300/277

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### **SUSPECTED OUTBREAK OF VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC FEVER AT 44 NARHK AND THE NEED TO INSTITUTE STRICT INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL AT ALL NIGERIAN ARMY HEALTHCARE FACILITIES**

1. The Accident and Emergency (A&E) Dept of 44 NARHK has witnessed the loss of 3 members of staff and a patient in the last 48 hours with some in critical condition. They are suspected to have died from Acute Viral Hemorrhagic Fever (VHF). This followed the management of a patient with febrile illness thought to have been the index patient with the disease 10 days ago, having presented with a febrile illness. The patient also died from the suspected disease condition. The common symptoms in those affected included fever, and non-specific symptoms likened to malaria. However, the illness was complicated by abnormal liver function, acute kidney failure, encephalopathy, microangiopathy, elevated D-Dimer among others. The A&E has been closed for thorough disinfection process and samples have been taken from suspected contacts and the deceased and sent to the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) laboratory in Kano for analysis. Similarly, the Kaduna state Epidemiologists have been invited to help in unraveling the aetiology of the febrile illness with a view to curtailing the spread of the disease. This is in addition to strict disease Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures that have been directed to be emplaced. Ribavirin injection (antiviral agent) has also been commenced on

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other suspected cases and those identified on contact tracing. 44 NARHK have also been directed to suspend accepting new cases from the general public in the interim while the situation is being contained.

2. The significant risk of contracting VHF among healthcare workers underscores the need to strengthen IPC practices across all NA health facilities. Prevention remains the best approach in dealing with such outbreak since treatment options are limited against a background of high mortality often recorded as in the current case at 44 NARHK. This can be achieved by raising the level of hospital preparedness for VHF outbreaks through capacity building and ensuring the use of **universal precautions when dealing with all patients**. Sequel to the foregoing, it is imperative that all units put in place strict IPC measures immediately to safeguard hospital staff and patients. Furthermore, IPC guidelines are to be strategically located for all members of staff to see and adhere to. This is forwarded for your information and strict compliance. Commanders and Commanding officers are to disseminate this information to their subunits. Please acknowledge.



**SO OKOIGI**  
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