IMPORTANT UPDATE, Re: University travel to Ebola-affected countries temporarily halted

Nigeria removed from the list of countries

As a precautionary measure, Penn State has implemented a temporary moratorium on travel to countries at risk of Ebola spread as identified by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Those countries now include: Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. The CDC has issued travel warnings, urging travellers to avoid all non-essential travel to Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea. In addition, The U.S. State Department has also issued travel warnings to those countries in the light of the outbreak.

“The safety of our Penn State family is our first priority,” said Michael Adewumi, vice provost for Global Programs. “We will continue to monitor this situation closely and take precautionary measures as recommended.”

Penn State’s standard procedure is to follow the recommendations made by CDC and the State Department. Any student desiring to travel to these countries on University related travel would require approval from the University. Any faculty or staff member traveling on University related business are also encouraged to complete a separate approval process before they travel. Faculty or staff with questions about this process should contact Kara Amoratis in Global Programs, via e-mail, at kea15@psu.edu for assistance.

While the Ebola virus poses little risk at this time to the U.S. general population, it has raised questions about travel to and from various regions of the world. Medical personnel in Penn State’s University Health Services are closely following all recommendations from the CDC and the Pennsylvania Department of Health and are continuing to work closely with University and community colleagues to determine risk and ensure the safety of the entire community.

If members of the University community elect to travel to a country included in the ban on personal business, they should be aware that they may encounter health screenings and restrictions upon return to the U.S. Students who travel to an affected country during upcoming holiday breaks will receive secure messages from University Health Services (UHS) asking that they complete a confidential health questionnaire based on guidelines from the CDC. It is important to note that the University is not in a position to provide medical or evacuation assistance to University community members on personal travel and therefore encourage travellers to research emergency assistance insurance options.

For more information about Penn State’s response to campus concerns about Ebola, visit:
- CDC Ebola site: www.cdc.gov/ebola
- University Health Services website: http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health/myUHS/