SAFE BURIAL PRACTICES
Objectives

- Describe **safe burial** for bodies of deceased EVD patients
- Describe role of **families** in burial practices
- Determine **transport** of body for safe burial

Suggested Readings:
WHO Safe Burial Practices
MSF VHF Dead Body Management
Prepare the Body

• Burial should occur as soon as possible after preparation
• PPE should be worn to prepare the body
• Spray the body with 1:10 bleach
• Wrap body in blanket/plastic shroud, careful to avoid contamination of gloves
• Do not wash the body, embalm or perform autopsies
• Place body in a leak proof mortuary (body) bag and close it securely. Spray bag with 1:10 bleach
• Place in a second leak proof mortuary bag and decontaminate utilizing bleach
Viral Load

Figure 1. Ebola virus RNA copy levels in sera over time from 45 Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) patients (27 fatal, 18 non-fatal)\textsuperscript{14}

Mortuary Bags

- Should be leak proof
Family

• Be aware of cultural practices and religious beliefs

• Counsel and help family understand why certain steps occur to protect from infection

• Consider ensuring that face can be viewed when bag is opened
Transport

• Place body bag on stretcher
• Utilize the shortest route with limited traffic
• Allow relatives to view and identify deceased prior to transport if applicable
• Transport staff shall wear PPE
• Have bleach available in the event of accidental contact
Disposition of Remains

- Remains should be cremated or buried

- No PPE is required when handling cremated remains
Coffin Burial

- Place body bag in coffin and close securely
- Disinfect stretcher thoroughly with bleach
- Team can now doff PPE in a designated area
- Place coffin in transport vehicle and transport to gravesite
- Use ropes to lower coffin into ground
Non-Coffin Burial

- Place stretcher and body bag in transport vehicle and transport to gravesite
- Utilize ropes to lower body to ground
- Disinfect stretcher with bleach
- Spray inside of transport vehicle with bleach
Sanitation Code of the Philippines

• Section 91 (h): Burial Requirements

“When the cause of death is a dangerous communicable disease, the remains shall be buried within 12 hours after death. They shall not be taken to any place of public assembly. Only the adult members of the family of the deceased may be permitted to attend the funeral.”
Summary

• Prepare body prior to burial
  – As soon as possible
  – Leak proof mortuary bag

• Counsel family and be aware of cultural beliefs

• Wear PPE for transport
  – Utilize shortest transport route

• Remains can be cremated or buried
Resources

• **WHO 2014 Use Safe Burial Practices**

• **MSF 2014. VHF Dead Body Management.**
  http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/transmission/human-transmission.html

• **CDC 2014. Guidance for Safe Handling of Human Remains of Ebola Patients in U.S. Hospitals and Mortuaries.**