REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Ministry of Health

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR HEALTH

PRESS RELEASE

DAY 21: FIRST CONTACTS GO HOME AS KENYA KEEPS ITS GUARD UP

Nairobi, 26th October 2026

Three weeks ago, on 6th October 2026, Kenya confirmed its first imported case of Ebola (Bundibugyo Virus Disease). Today, **the first twenty (20) contacts who have completed the full 21-day monitoring period and are in good health** are returning home to their families. The remaining 98 contacts are expected to be released in four waves beginning 3rd November 2026 based on their individual health assessment. This is a milestone worth celebrating, and a clear sign that early identification, quarantine and close monitoring are working. **It is also a reminder that the work is not yet done.**

The total number of confirmed cases remains **nine (9)**, two **(2)** of whom passed on giving us a case fatality rate (CFR) **of 22.2%.** The remaining **7** patients in the treatment units are stable and continue to receive care from our multidisciplinary team of experts. Genomic sequencing of three **(3)** of the **nine samples**, show **genetic linkage to the first case** and to the Bundibugyo virus lineage in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Sequencing of the remaining six samples is under way.

Each of the twenty contacts was assessed against the release criteria, including 21 days without any symptoms since their last exposure. They **do not pose any risk** to their families, colleagues or neighbors, and we ask communities to welcome them back home warmly. We thank them and their families for their patience and sacrifice.

Quarantine and illness can take a heavy toll on the mind as well as the body. The Ministry is therefore providing **mental health and psychosocial support** through trained counsellors and mental health professionals to contacts in quarantine, those returning home, patients and their families, and the health workers on the front line.

Each one of us has a role in ending this outbreak. Those still in quarantine play a vital part: by staying in their own rooms, not sharing meals, bathrooms or personal items, following the guidance of our health teams and **reporting any symptom/s**

immediately, they protect themselves, fellow contacts, healthcare workers and the general public from potential infection.

We continue to strengthen Infection prevention and control (IPC) measures in our health facilities. Assessments have been carried out, IPC focal persons and champions appointed, health workers trained, and correct donning and removal of personal protective equipment demonstrated, while distribution of PPE to facilities is ongoing. Surveillance and screening remain in place at points of entry, in health facilities and in communities, and every alert is investigated promptly in line with the **7-1-7 approach**: **detecting** outbreaks within **seven days**, **notifying** within **one day**, and **responding** within **seven days.**

While we celebrate this milestone today, **our eyes remain firmly on the finish line.** The outbreak will be declared over only after **42 days. The 42-day count starts when the last confirmed patient has had two negative tests at least 48 hours apart and is discharged or is safely buried. We cannot afford to drop our vigilance until we reach that point.**

Travel, trade and public gatherings are not restricted. Anyone with fever, unusual tiredness, muscle or joint pains, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea or unexplained bleeding, especially after possible contact with a case, or history of travel to DRC should **seek care promptly** and share their exposure history with the health worker. For help or to report a suspected case, call **719** free of charge or use the **Jali WhatsApp chatbot** on **0700 719 719**, and rely only on official Ministry of Health channels for information.

We thank our national response teams, county governments, healthcare workers, development partners, community leaders and every Kenyan who has stood with the response. Each milestone brings us closer to the end of this outbreak, and **together, we will get there**.

Dr. Patrick Amoth, CBS
DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR HEALTH