

Increased travel prompts Ebola protocol

With the expectation of an increase in travel for the Christmas period, the Ministry of Health is advising that there are certain protocols in place to deal with persons who travel from Ebola-affected countries within a 21 - day period.

Acting chief medical officer, Dr Marion Bullock DuCasse, has advised that it is important that persons are aware of what to expect "as we will need the cooperation of everyone as we put in place measures to limit the exposure of our population as we prepare for any possibility of the introduction of Ebola". The following steps will be taken for persons who are not experiencing symptoms but have travelled to an Ebola-affected country: Person will be interviewed at the airport on arrival and asked questions regarding symptoms, travel pattern and contact with suspected or confirmed cases of Ebola. If person was in an Ebola-affected country under 21 days, he/she will be quarantined at home. Person will be monitored twice daily for fever by the health team, in addition to twice-daily self-checks for 21 days from the time of leaving the affected country. Person will be instructed to contact the health team if symptoms develop. If the individual experiences symptoms, he/she will be transported to an Ebola Treatment Centre, admitted, isolated, tested for Ebola and the appropriate management done. Family and close contacts will then be quarantined and monitored for a further 21 days. For persons who are showing symptoms and travelled to an Ebola-affected area in the last 21 days, the following steps will be taken: Person will be temporarily isolated at the airport. Interviewed by the Public Health team. Transported to an Ebola Treatment Centre. Tested for Ebola and the appropriate management done. Close contacts will be quarantined, including persons who accompanied the traveller. Dr Bullock DuCasse is imploring individuals to assist the health team as these steps have been established to protect the health of the nation.