

British Ebola nurse discharged from hospital

January 25 2015

A British nurse who contracted Ebola while working as a volunteer in Sierra Leone said she was "happy to be alive" as she was discharged from hospital on Saturday having made a full recovery.

Scottish nurse Pauline Cafferkey was diagnosed in Glasgow on December 29 before being transferred to Britain's only isolation ward for Ebola patients at London's Royal Free Hospital.

While there, her condition became critical but she later showed signs of improvement and was taken off the danger list on January 12.

"Ms Cafferkey has made a complete recovery and is now free of the virus," said a statement from the London hospital on Saturday.

Prime Minister David Cameron wrote on his Twitter page that it was "great to hear Pauline Cafferkey has been discharged" and paid tribute to the "world class care" offered by the London hospital.

In her first public comments since contracting the disease, the nurse revealed she still "did not feel 100 percent", but that she was "just happy to be alive".

"I feel quite weak, but I'm looking forward to going home," she added.

Cafferkey thanked the hospital staff who "saved my life" and credited her recovery on music and Irn Bru, a fizzy drink popular in Scotland.

The hospital's infectious diseases team leader Michael Jacobs said: "We are delighted that Pauline has recovered and is now well enough to go home.

"I am very proud of the staff who have been caring for her. It is because of the skill and hard work of the entire team that she is now able to go home."

She had contracted the disease while working as a volunteer at a British-built Ebola treatment centre in Sierra Leone.

The Ebola outbreak in West Africa has killed nearly 9,000 people, according to World Health Organization (WHO) figures.

The vast majority of cases have been in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea.

However, it appears the disease is now on the retreat with the United Nations saying on Saturday that Liberia was dealing with just five remaining cases.

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