

Sierra Leone sees worrying spike in Ebola cases over week

March 12 2015, by Clarence Roy-Macaulay

Sierra Leone has seen a worrying spike in confirmed Ebola cases over the past week in four districts, the head of the national Ebola response center said Thursday.

New measures must now be put into place to contain the surges, said the head of the National Ebola Response Centre, Alfred Palo Conteh.

Fifteen cases were recorded Wednesday, along with 16 on Monday and Tuesday respectively, according to Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health and Sanitation.

"We are now on a bumpy road to zero number of cases to get to President Ernest Bai Koroma's target of March 31," said Palo Conteh. "It is frustrating."

Palo Conteh said that new Ebola hotspots have emerged in recent days in Cabala Town and Magazine Cut in the east of the capital, Freetown, where a number of confirmed cases have been recorded. The other hotspot is in the west of Freetown.

"The problem with the Western Area is that it is densely populated and people behave differently," he said. "People are becoming complacent."

He said NERC would be putting new measures into place that they would present to the Cabinet and announce soon to contain the situation. The responders are also trying to engage traditional and cultural leaders.

Liberia declared its last Ebola patient on March 5, but both Sierra Leone and Guinea are struggling to contain the Ebola outbreak that started about a year ago and has killed nearly 10,000 people.

More than 3,600 people have died in Sierra Leone from Ebola, according to the World Health Organization.

Officials on Thursday said a British military health care worker in Sierra Leone who has tested positive for Ebola is being transferred back to Britain for specialized treatment at the isolation unit at the Royal Free Hospital in London. Two other UK [health](#) care workers are also being brought back to Britain for assessment as a precaution.

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