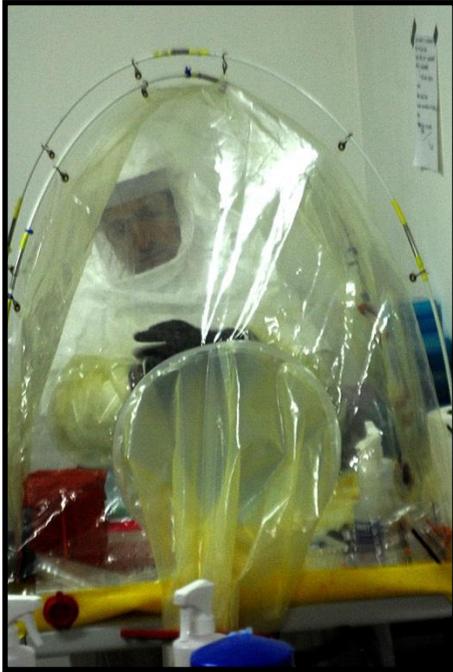


# FACT SHEET: Medical labs

## Medical Labs are instrumental in U.S. Government's effort to contain Ebola



*A specially-trained U.S. Navy medical lab technician tests blood samples for Ebola at one of two facilities in Liberia. Photo by SFC Will Patterson, USARAF public affairs.*

Two U.S. Navy Medical Labs are currently operational. One is at the Island Clinic Ebola Treatment Unit in Monrovia (co-located near the ETU operated by the World Health Organization) and the other is operating in Gbarnga, Bong County (co-located near the ETU operated by the International Medical Corps). Each lab has 3 military clinicians conducting tests on blood samples that are provided from Liberian health clinics. These facilities can test up to 100 samples per day with about an 8-hour turnaround for results.

Medical testing labs are essential to the containment of Ebola, because they can quickly and efficiently segment populations into clusters of 'potential', 'suspected' and 'confirmed' cases. By adding capacity to test blood samples and return results within hours, the cluster of those 'suspected' cases will become smaller and more manageable in the isolation of confirmed cases.

Those who test negative for Ebola can be treated at other clinics, saving beds for confirmed Ebola patients in ETUs.

Early Ebola symptoms mimic other common illnesses on the African Continent, including malaria, yellow fever, diphtheria and cholera. When an infected patient becomes symptomatic, their bodily fluids and secretions become contagious; therefore, the speed of identification and isolation of confirmed cases is

critical to containment. Medical testing labs are the principle enabling capability to ensure patients can be segregated to confirmed cases for proper isolation, care and treatment.

On Oct. 9, the U.S. Army announced the deployment of the 20<sup>th</sup> CBRNE Command (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives) Soldiers from the Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland-based 1<sup>st</sup> Area Medical Laboratory to establish additional laboratories in support of Operation United Assistance in Liberia.