

The Nebraska Biocontainment Unit (NBU) is a secured area with a highly trained staff of medical and nursing personnel who safely provide all levels of care to patients infected with deadly infectious diseases.

## UNIT FUNCTIONS AND CAPABILITIES

### Features include:

- Isolation rooms maintain negative air flow with 15 or more air exchanges per hour
- High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) air filtration system
- Secured access, double door, pressure controlled main entrance
- Separate staff entrance and exit
- Staff decontamination shower
- Dual “pass-through” autoclaves for decontamination of waste, linens and materials leaving the unit
- Secure telehealth communication system
- Close proximity to the Nebraska Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) BSL III Lab plus satellite BSL III Lab within the NBU
- Patient transport isolation unit allows for safe transport

**Philip Smith, MD**  
Medical Director, NBU

**Angela Hewlett, MD**  
Associate Medical Director, NBU

**Ted Cieslak, MD**  
Associate Medical Director, NBU

**Shelly Schwedhelm, MSN, RN, NEA-BC**  
Executive Director, NBU  
Emergency Preparedness &  
Infection Prevention

**Kate Boulter, RN, BAN (HONS)**  
Nurse Manager, NBU

**Chris Kratochvil, MD**  
Associate Vice Chancellor for  
Clinical Research, UNMC  
Vice President for Research, Nebraska Medicine

**Angie Vasa, BSN, RN, CCRN**  
Lead Staff Nurse, NBU

**John Lowe, PhD**  
Director of Research, NBU

**Elizabeth Beam, RN, PhD**  
Education Director, NBU

**TO BE DETERMINED**  
Chief Medical Officer, Nebraska Department  
of Health and Human Services  
Director, Division of Public Health

### CONTACT US:

[nbu@nebraskamed.com](mailto:nbu@nebraskamed.com)

**Nebraska Biocontainment Unit**  
982470 Nebraska Medical Center  
Omaha, NE 68198-2470

NMWR 9590



**University of Nebraska<sup>™</sup>  
Medical Center**  
**Nebraska Medicine**



## NEBRASKA BIOCONTAINMENT UNIT

Nebraska Medicine  
University of Nebraska Medical Center  
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services



**University of Nebraska<sup>™</sup>  
Medical Center**  
**Nebraska Medicine**



The threat of global infectious diseases is very real.  
*Nebraska is prepared.*



## NATIONAL AND REGIONAL RECOGNITION

**THE NEBRASKA BIOCONTAINMENT UNIT WAS ONE OF THREE UNITS SELECTED TO CARE FOR UNITED STATES CITIZENS WITH EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE MEDICALLY EVACUATED FROM AFRICA.**

### **National Ebola Training and Education Center (NETEC)**

UNMC | Nebraska Medicine, in collaboration with Emory University in Atlanta and Bellevue Hospital in New York City, were awarded a joint contract by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to establish and co-lead the nation's National Ebola Training and Education Center.

### **U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Region 7 Treatment Center for Ebola and Other Highly Infectious Diseases**

The NBU was selected as one of 10 health departments and associated partner hospitals to become special regional treatment centers for patients with Ebola or other severe, highly infectious diseases.

The biocontainment unit houses patients with hazardous infectious diseases in an environment that maximizes the safety for staff and the community at large. A full spectrum of care is provided for patients of all ages – from quarantine to intensive care treatment. The unit is designed for highly infectious diseases, (Ebola virus, smallpox, and respiratory diseases such as avian influenza) whether acquired in a laboratory accident, as a naturally occurring infection, or in a bioterrorist attack.

The Nebraska Biocontainment Unit (NBU) was dedicated in 2005 and drilled for nine years to prepare for activation. The NBU is a collaborative project involving Nebraska Medicine, University of Nebraska Medical Center and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. It is one of only a few biocontainment units in the United States and is the largest, with up to a 10-bed capacity depending on the specific infection. In addition to providing medical care

for patients with hazardous diseases, the unit has active research and outreach training programs for the region and nation.

Unit personnel consists of an extraordinary staff of select physicians, nurses, technicians and respiratory therapists specially trained in high level isolation and bio-preparedness. Most work full-time in other areas of Nebraska Medicine but remain on call to report promptly for duty when the unit is activated.

The NBU was one of three units in the United States selected in the fall of 2014 to receive U.S. citizens with Ebola virus disease medically evacuated from Africa. The outstanding staff has received numerous awards for its courageous and extraordinary level of care including recognition from the White House, the Nebraska Legislature, and the University Of Nebraska Board Of Regents. In addition, they were honored as “Midlanders of the Year” by the Omaha World Herald.