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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Shelby County Health Department

June 8, 2022

RE: Monkeypox Update and Preliminary Guidance

Dear Healthcare Provider,

Monkeypox is a rare but potentially serious viral infection that is endemic to several African countries. Since early May 2022, cases of monkeypox have been identified in Europe, North America and Australia. There have been no cases of monkeypox identified in Tennessee or Shelby County.

Typical signs and symptoms include:

- Fever
- Flu-like symptoms
- Lymphadenopathy
- Rash

However, according to the CDC, current cases identified have atypical features:

- Rash still characteristic; but often starting in genital and perianal areas
- Rash sometimes not disseminating to other parts of body
- Being recognized at outpatient clinics because easily confused with sexually transmitted infections
- Prodromal symptoms mild or not occurring

The incubation period is typically 7-14 days but can range from 5-21 days. Illness can last 2-4 weeks. Patient is infectious once symptoms begin (weather prodromal or rash symptoms) until lesions scab and scabs falls off.

Many current cases self-identify as men who have sex with men, but cases could be occurring in other groups not yet identified. It's important to consider monkeypox in a differential diagnosis if the characteristic rash is present, especially since current cases are presenting atypically. Other causes such as STIs should be considered as well.

Specimen collection should be performed on suspect cases at the bedside prior to discharge. Instructions for specimen collection can be found in the Tennessee Department of Health TNHAN document. Shelby County Health Department will contact the Tennessee Department of Health for testing authorization and arrange transport of specimen to the state laboratory if testing is approved.

Persons under investigation for monkeypox infection should isolate until test results are available. Presumptive positive and laboratory-confirmed cases should remain isolated until illness and rash have resolved.

The Shelby County Health Department will be conducting case investigations and contact tracing of individuals with laboratory-confirmed monkeypox infection.

If you identify a possible case of monkeypox, please contact the Shelby County Health Department immediately at 901-508-2823.

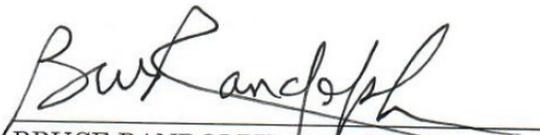
Resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/clinical-recognition.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/monitoring.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/transmission.html>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Randolph". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

BRUCE RANDOLPH, M.D., M.P.H.
SHELBY COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER