

INCEF (International Conservation and Education Fund) Recognized For Disease Prevention

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Dr. Mary Reynolds of the Poxvirus/Rabies Unit of the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta recognizes INCEF as instrumental in the fight against contagious diseases turning into epidemics:

The prompt identification of rare but potentially serious health events is an ongoing challenge to the public health community. A partnership between **INCEF**, **Medecins d'Afrique**, **CDC** and the **Congolese Ministry of Health** has resulted in the establishment of an effective monitoring and alert system for monkeypox in Likouala, a very remote, very under resourced region of the Congo. In September 2010, a suspect case of monkeypox was identified in an isolated village, adjacent to an area of intense community outreach performed by INCEF. The individual was brought to the attention of the medical community during the early stages of illness.

This allowed for the patient to be promptly hospitalized—thereby significantly diminishing the risk of additional disease transmission in the village setting—and, once hospitalized, the patient could be cared for by physicians specifically trained to recognize and treat the symptoms of monkeypox virus infection. Laboratory confirmation of the illness (as monkeypox) was rendered within days, and investigators were able to ascertain in relatively short order that a cluster of cases had likely occurred in the village but that transmission ceased with hospitalization of the individual in question. To enact a rapid and appropriate public health response, particularly to a poxvirus-associated illness, can be challenging even in a resource-rich environment such as the United States.

To achieve as much in a community with so little, and with such few resources available to medical and public health workers, is an achievement of record—something worth cheering about. Gaining the willing participation of community members to detect and report unusual health events, as occurred here, is vital to combating potential epidemics.

To my thinking, INCEF has proven itself to be the lynchpin in the fight to prevent monkeypox from gaining a foothold in Congo, because their work is so very effective.

- Dr. Mary Reynolds

Source :

<http://www.incef.org/news/incef-recognized-disease-prevention>

