

Study Shows Ebola Could Hit UK and France by Late October



London, October 7 (RHC)-- Analyzing spread patterns and airline traffic data, a new study has reached the conclusion that there is a chance Ebola could reach Britain and France by October 24th.

According to the study, first published in the PLoS Current Outbreaks journal, the two countries have rather high chances -- 50 percent for UK and 75 percent for France -- of being hit by the disease before the end of this month.

By October 24th, there is still a 25-percent chance Ebola will have spread to France and a 15-percent likelihood it will have been imported into Britain even if there is an 80-percent reduction in travel. Derek Gatherer of Britain's Lancaster University, who has been tracking the epidemic, said: "If this thing continues to rage on in West Africa and indeed gets worse, as some people have predicted, then it's only a matter of time before one of these cases ends up on a plane to Europe."

The deadly epidemic has killed more than 3,400 people since it began in West Africa in March and has now started to spread faster, infecting almost 7,200 people so far.

Ebola spreads through contact with bodily fluids such as blood, saliva, and sweat. It has killed around two-thirds of those it has infected. There is currently no known cure for Ebola. Nigeria has been hit by the epidemic in addition to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

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