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Personal protective equipment for healthcare workers: Dressing in the dark

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Recent infectious disease outbreaks have highlighted the limitations of evidenced based Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). PPE testing has historically been done by individual component, rather than as a bundle for contact isolation. Unfortunately, testing individual components of PPE may not necessarily equate to protection of healthcare workers when using a PPE bundle. The purpose of this discussion is to review the available literature for viral outbreak scenario PPE, examples of national and international PPE protocols for some outbreaks and some unpublished data related to PPE selection and training. Strategies for performing “grass-roots” bundle testing by organizations employing PPE will be discussed. New technologies and innovations relating to PPE will be reviewed.

Biography

Todd E Bell completed Medical school at the University of Arkansas and a combined internal medicine/pediatrics residency program at Duke University. Since moving to Texas Tech, he has served as the Infection Prevention Medical Director for Northwest Texas Hospital and Director of the West Texas Influenza Center. He works closely with state and local public health agencies. He is the Regional Director of the Center for Tropical Medicine and Infectious Disease and Regional Chairman of the Department of Pediatrics in Amarillo. He works with an international collaboration in influenza research, as well as pursuing research interests in epidemiology and dysautonomia.

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