Welcome to this inaugural edition of the *Nebraska Isolation & Quarantine Manual*.

In 2005 the organizations that would eventually comprise Nebraska Medicine opened the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit (NBU), with the support of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The NBU was the third dedicated patient biocontainment unit to open in the United States. The vision of Dr. Phil Smith, then head of the Division of Infectious Diseases, drove the development of the NBU and was inspired by the recent experiences of the anthrax attacks of 2001, the SARS outbreak of 2002–3, and the 2003 outbreak of monkeypox in the midwestern United States. The 10-bed unit and dedicated supporting facilities were planned carefully, incorporating unique and robust engineering, administrative, and personal protective controls.

Most importantly, the NBU assembled and trained a dedicated and multidisciplinary team of health care professionals and scientists. They collectively researched known best practices, drafted protocols, and practiced repeatedly. Over this time the team became a true family of talented and caring professionals. In 2014 the team’s decade-long commitment was tested as the NBU activated in order to care for three patients with Ebola virus disease (EVD) repatriated from West Africa.

Capitalizing on this experience, the UNMC/Nebraska Medicine team joined Emory University and the New York Health and Hospitals Corporation, Bellevue Hospital Center, to found the National Ebola Training and Education Center (NETEC). This federally designated center leads national efforts to improve infection control procedures and practices, as well as isolation and quarantine capabilities, at medical
facilities throughout the United States. Through the NETEC, our team is able to share their expertise for best practices and team-based training with hundreds of designated facilities across the nation.

We see the *Nebraska Isolation & Quarantine Manual* as an opportunity to expand our ability to share our experiences and lessons learned with a broader professional audience. We feel strongly that if health care and affiliated professionals become more proficient in the basic principles shared herein, we can improve preparedness for catastrophic infectious disease outbreaks and mitigate their effects, while improving delivery of care overall. At UNMC/Nebraska Medicine, we are committed in our growing efforts to build a safer and healthier nation and global community.

It is an honor to dedicate this manual to our colleague and friend, Dr. Phil Smith, a true, quiet, and unsung hero in every sense of the word. Phil’s vision, tireless efforts, compassion, dedicated leadership, and enduring friendship are an inspiration to all of us who care for patients with highly hazardous communicable diseases.

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