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Congo fever virus patient escapes from isolation

KAKUMIRO. A yet-to-be identified patient admitted with symptoms of the deadly Congo-Crimea haemorrhagic fever virus has escaped from an isolation centre in Kakumiro District. The virus outbreaks have a case fatality rate of up to 40 per cent, meaning nearly four of every 10 persons who contract the virus risk death.

Mr Guide Mugabe, the officer-in-charge of Nkooko Health Centre III, said the patient escaped from the health facility on Wednesday under unknown circumstances.

The patient was admitted and isolated after presenting signs and symptoms similar to those of Congo fever.

Already, two people have died from similar symptoms in Nkooko and Mpasana sub-counties.

But Mr Mugabe downplayed the situation, saying: "We received many patients with signs and symptoms of the disease, but they were tested

negative and the situation is stabilising."

Meanwhile, the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI), a non-governmental organisation, has stepped in to help fight against the outbreak.

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Dr Daniel Luwaga, an expert from IDI, said they intervened by training the health workers on how to handle

and treat the victims of the disease, with the first training conducted at Nkooko health centre III where there have been many admissions.

He said they will also provide more equipment to be used in the treating of the victims.

About Congo-Crimea haemorrhagic fever virus

The World Health Organisation says virus is primarily transmitted to people from ticks and livestock animals.

Human-to-human transmission can also occur resulting from close contact with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected persons.

There is no vaccine available for either people or animals.