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Editorial: Leadership at Ohio Department of Health excelled during Ebola scare

Ohio beat long odds in October when it became the second state, after Texas, to face the challenges of protecting the public from Ebola. By all accounts, the Ohio Department of Health, under the leadership of interim Director Richard Hodges, rose admirably to the challenge. That may be the main reason for Hodges' relatively smooth passage through an Ohio Senate committee hearing recently.

Hodges, who has been on the job since August, was nominated by Gov. John Kasich to permanently fill the position. State law requires the department director either to be a medical doctor or to have considerable public health experience. Hodges is not a doctor, and his background in marketing and planning for a health center and administration of a trade organization's health plan rightly raised eyebrows.

But to his credit, the Ohio Department of Health skillfully walked a fine line between prudence and overreaction when a Dallas nurse who had cared for an Ebola patient traveled to Northeast Ohio before showing symptoms of the disease. The state put in place more restrictive monitoring protocols than the federal Centers for Disease Control had issued but did so with an eye to the risks of discouraging health care workers from traveling to West Africa to treat patients.

Full editorial can be read here:

<http://www.timesreporter.com/article/20141116/OPINION/141119509/10705/OPINION>