

Local researchers testing remote control Ebola care

Researchers hope prototypes will soon be in medical centers

Kelley Tuthill BOSTON —



Kelley Tuthill/WCVB SOURCE: Kelley Tuthill/WCVB

If a television can have a remote control, why can't a medical device?

[Watch the report](#)

The White House challenged companies nationwide to come up with high-tech ways to improve the country's ability to

treat Ebola patients safely.

Those devices were on display in Cambridge ahead of a presentation Friday in Washington.

"Unfortunately I would say, it sometimes takes something as significant and concerning as Ebola or other catastrophe to bring people together," said Dr. Julian Goldman of the Massachusetts General Hospital's Medical Device Interoperability Program.

Among the innovations is a robot that can go into an Ebola patient's room minimizing the number of health care workers exposed to the deadly virus.

"When we need more supplies in the patient's room, we can put the supplies on a robot," explained Goldman while watching a robot developed at Worcester Polytechnic Institute move across the floor.

The technology includes devices that can take a temperature remotely, a ventilator controlled by a laptop and a bio-patch that records vital signs on what's called a patient storm tracker for early Ebola detection.

"Very low cost," explained Brian Russell of Covidien/Zephyr. "It's been developed the last 10 years by the military. They have it under their uniforms now."

Another device uses a camera to monitor a patient's pulse, breathing rate and temperature.

Some of the prototypes could be available to U.S. hospitals in as soon as 30 to 60 days.

"There aren't many hospitals today that are accepting Ebola patients," said Golman. "So doing this for eight or 10 hospitals is very achievable."