

Public Health Preparedness Updates

March 2012



Meetings and Conference Calls

Title: Louisiana Full Scale Exercise

Date: February 28–March 1, 2012

Staff Representative: Resham Patel

Member Representative: N/A

Highlights: The Louisiana Office of Public Health–Center for Community Preparedness conducted a full-scale exercise (FSE) in the first quarter of 2012 to validate the state’s plans for distribution and dispensing of assets in the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). The exercise spanned three days and three different locations, beginning at the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Emergency Operations Center, moving then to the delivery of assets, and concluding with dispensing activities. Conduct of this FSE fulfilled requirements for Project Public Health Ready (PPHR) as well as those contained in the newly revised CDC cooperative agreement guidance. This exercise directly involved two regions that are preparing PPHR applications for fall 2012; NACCHO PPHR staff was invited to observe the exercise and provide feedback.

Title: Institute of Medicine Public Engagement Workshop-Los Angeles

Date: March 1–2, 2012

Staff Representative: Tim Siemsen and Jo Ellen Warner

Member Representative: N/A

Highlights: This workshop was the fourth and final session focused on the antiviral dispensing and nurse triage line projects. More than 100 community members from south central Los Angeles devoted their day to providing feedback on components of both projects, including acceptability of a text messaging system for adherence to prescriptions and various dispensing scenarios.

Title: PAHPA Reauthorization: Improving Our Nation’s Preparedness

Date: March 1, 2012

Staff Representative: Paul Decknick

Member Representative: N/A

Highlights: A brief meeting on Capitol Hill demonstrated the strong support for the Reauthorization of the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) by several key public health partners and stakeholders. The Center for Biosecurity at UPMC co-hosted Senator Robert P. Casey Jr, Congressman Mike Rogers, along with several other key stakeholders from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Dr. Ali Khan), the White House (Brian Kamoie), and representatives from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA). After a brief synopsis of the current biological threat and existing challenges, the respected panel discussed the importance of PAHPA re-authorization from the perspective of each key agency. A full meeting summary can be found on UPMC’s website at www.upmc-biosecurity.org/website/events/20120301-pahpa_reauthor/index.html.

Title: CDC-ASTHO National Health Security Preparedness Index Subcommittee Meeting

Date: March 8, 2012

Staff Representative: N/A

Member Representative: Alisa Diggs, Maricopa County Department of Public Health and Joshua Carlyle, Carver County Public Health & Environment

Highlights: NACCHO member representatives attended the National Health Security Preparedness Index (NHSPI) Subcommittee Meeting to provide input about the direction of the index, capture key points, and share feedback. The goal of the NHSPI is to help define our current level of preparedness nationwide. With this being a large objective, there was some concern regarding the timeline for modeling; a recommendation to limit the initial index to only public health and to add healthcare in a subsequent version was voiced at the meeting. It was noted that the index will be a working project that may be imperfect in its first version. It was also suggested that additional subject-matter experts be added to the modeling group. Based on the feedback from the Steering Committee, the subcommittees on communications and stakeholder activities were combined due to their common goals and objectives. In this subcommittee, several additional observations were made regarding the ability to accomplish the intended tasks with the short timeline. This concern was heightened by the fact that the content and scope of the index is still being developed. Finally, there was some feedback regarding the role of the index in relation to existing measures and how they all relate. It appeared that the index seeks to achieve a different goal and will be independent of existing measures, which may cause additional confusion and frustration amongst states and locals.

Title: American Red Cross Disaster Leadership Conference

Date: March 13–16, 2012

Staff Representative: Jack Herrmann

Member Representative: N/A

Highlights: This conference brought together Red Cross leaders and private stakeholders from across the country to identify opportunities to build, strengthen, and sustain partnerships. Jack presented on the key elements of success and failure in building partnerships. In addition, Jack highlighted specific examples of current Red Cross-Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) partnerships nationwide.

Title: UCLA Preparedness and Emergency Response Research Center (PERRC) Advisory Committee

Date: March 14–16, 2012

Staff Representative: Laura Biesiadecki

Member Representative: N/A

Highlights: The purpose of the Advisory Committee meeting is to bring together representatives from state and local health departments (LHDs) and academia to advise researchers in the UCLA PERRC on current and future research activities. The UCLA PERRC research projects investigate how health departments can best engage schools, community, and faith-based organizations and environmental organizations in preparedness and response activities. At the meeting, there were presentations on research results and open discussion on how to translate the results into products that can be used at the local level.

Title: CDC—Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response Partner’s Meeting

Date: March 19, 2012

Staff Representative: Scott Fisher

Member Representative: N/A

Highlights: NACCHO continued its quarterly meetings with the CDC, American Public Health Association, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, Association of Public Health Laboratories, The Association of Schools of Public Health, and others to discuss key preparedness issues. During this meeting the partner organizations discussed issues including PAHPA reauthorization, the FY13 appropriations process, the National Health Security Preparedness Index, and the CDC’s National Strategic Plan for Public Health Preparedness and Response.

Title: DHS—Promoting Awareness of Human Trafficking: Partnering with First Responders on the Front Lines

Date: March 19, 2012

Staff Representative: Paul Decknick

Member Representative: N/A

Highlights: The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Blue Campaign is a new initiative aimed at first responders and other public health entities to help them identify signs of human trafficking during the execution of their duties in the community. With human trafficking on the rise, DHS is reaching out to a broader audience to help identify and report this form of modern day slavery. For more information on the Blue Campaign, visit www.dhs.gov/humantrafficking.

Title: Nurse Triage Line Project Stakeholders Meeting

Date: March 20, 2012

Staff Representative: Jack Herrmann, Tim Siemsen, Jo Ellen Warner, and Francesca Blanco

Member Representative: NACCHO Nurse Triage Line Project Ad Hoc Workgroup

Highlights: The CDC's Influenza Coordination Unit in collaboration with ASTHO and NACCHO ASTHO held the day-long Nurse Triage Line Project Stakeholders Meeting in Atlanta, GA to facilitate input to explore a new model for a nationwide network of nurse triage lines. These coordinated nurse triage lines would provide information to the public, triage symptomatic callers, and provide access to antiviral medications to those meeting a standardized clinical algorithm and protocols for treatment.

Title: CDC/ASPR Joint Preparedness Conference

Date: March 21–23, 2012

Staff Representative: Jack Herrmann and Scott Fisher

Member Representative: Los Angeles, Washington, DC, Chicago, and New York City

Highlights: CDC and the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response invited the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Directors and Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) Coordinators from the state and territorial health departments, and four directly funded cities to participate in a three-day meeting to provide awardees with training and information on the aligned 2012 HPP/PHEP Joint Cooperative Agreement, assist awardees with planning their aligned program, and connect awardees with CDC/OPHPR/DSLRL and HHS/ASPR/OPEO leadership, project officers, and subject-matter experts to receive guidance, support, and focused technical assistance.

Title: MRC Capacity Building Workshop

Date: March 27–28, 2012

Staff Representative: Paul Decknick

Member Representative: N/A

Highlights: The Office of the Surgeon General, Division of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps (DCVMRC), NACCHO, representatives from the American Red Cross, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), Public Health Foundation, and MRC units nationwide met in Denver, CO to discuss the long-range strategic outlook of the MRC. The workgroup participants discussed "Factors for Success" for the MRC mission, strategies for implementation, and how these issues will enhance the capacity of MRC units to carry out their local missions effectively. The meeting sought input from MRC unit leaders and injected their perspective into the national planning documents at the DCVMRC Program Office.

Title: 2012 National Capitol Region Extended Metropolitan Statistical Area Mass Dispensing Exercise

Date: March 27, 2012

Staff Representative: Resham Patel

Member Representative: N/A

Highlights: The DC Department of Health (DOH) invited NACCHO to observe the 2012 National Capitol Region Extended Metropolitan Statistical Area Mass Dispensing Exercise. The exercise was a regionwide assessment of mass dispensing capabilities, and included staging of the “Eagle Pack” (Medical Counter Measure Training Materials), as well as an informative briefing from the CDC’s Receipt, Staging & Storage (RSS) Task Force and the creation of an order, from request to completion.

Title: At Risk Populations-SNS Meeting

Date: March 28, 2012

Staff Representative: Jack Herrmann, Tim Siemsen, and Jo Ellen Warner

Member Representative: Maggie Jarry, Vulnerable Populations Coordinator, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene–Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response

Highlights: ASTHO and NACCHO, in collaboration with the Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters—and funded by the CDC—convened a group of federal, state, and local health agencies and national organizations that represent groups who face access challenges due to age, economic disadvantage, language and literacy, health and disability, and cultural, geographic, and social isolation. The meeting used a three-dimensional (3-D) training tool developed by the NACCHO Advanced Practice Center at the University of Chicago to visualize and explore strategies for planning POD operations.

In addition to governmental representatives, attendees also included representatives from the following organizations: All Resources Coordinated (formerly National Association of Retarded Citizens), American Academy of Pediatrics, American Association of Peoples with Disabilities, Asian and Pacific Islander Health Forum, Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs, National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors, National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities, National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, National Disability Rights Network, National Indian Health Board, National Public Health Information Coalition, National Urban League, and March of Dimes. Work at this meeting will result in published guidance for health agencies to use when considering how to reach all members of the community in public health emergencies.

Public Health Preparedness Workgroup Updates

Public Health Preparedness Committee (PHPC)

Chair: Dave Cox; **Staff:** [Jack Herrmann](#)

The committee met to discuss the format of the monthly conference call. In addition, the PHEP/HPP, PPD-8, and CDC Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response Strategic Plan Update—Objective 4 & 5 were discussed in detail. Laura Hanen joined the call to provide the Governmental Affairs update.

Advanced Practice Centers Workgroup (APC)

Chair: Brian Johnson; **Staff:** [Laura Biesiadecki](#)

The workgroup did not meet in March. The April meeting date is to be determined.

Medical Reserve Corps Workgroup (MRC)

Chair: Robert Cohen; **Staff:** [Paul Decknick](#)

The MRC Workgroup has been working diligently to compile and post several MRC-related tools and resources to the NACCHO website. The resulting toolkit will serve as a powerful asset to new MRC unit leaders during their early development. The MRC Workgroup members have also been actively engaged in developing outreach opportunities for

local MRC units to share their stories with their congressional representatives. The MRC Workgroup has been stressing the importance of sharing success stories with Federal partners and has been working to develop a template for reporting.

Public Health and Emergency Management Workgroup (PH-EM)

Chair: Terence Hayes; **Staff:** [Tim Siemsen](#)

The PH-EM workgroup conference call was held on Thursday, March 22.

The workgroup has developed an outline for identifying and cataloging resources that local health departments bring to preparedness planning and actual emergency or disaster response. A sub-group has been set up to build on the outline and recommend templates and other tools for use by local health departments when communicating and planning with emergency management. Workgroup members were updated on a CDC Division of Global Migration and Quarantine project that addresses issues of public health messaging and emergency response related to airline passengers and in airport facilities.

Pandemic Influenza Workgroup

Chair: Christine Brooks; **Staff:** [Tim Siemsen](#)

The workgroup did not meet in March. The April meeting date is to be determined.

Preparedness Outcomes and Measures Workgroup (POM)

Chair: Karen Smith; **Staff:** [Samantha Morgan](#)

The workgroup is moving forward with the development of a joint performance measures policy statement with ASTHO. A task force will draft the policy statement along with members from ASTHO's Performance Evaluation and Improvement Workgroup (PEIW). The policy statement will be reviewed by the PPHR workgroup, Outcomes and Measures Workgroup, ASTHO's PEIW, the Preparedness Committee, and ASTHO/NACCHO Joint Counsel prior to submitting to both boards for approval in July 2012. The joint taskforce is expected to have a draft of the joint policy statement by the beginning of April. The next call is scheduled for 2 PM–3:30 PM, EDT on April 9.

Project Public Health Ready Workgroup (PPHR)

Chair: Mark McDonnell; **Staff:** [Resham Patel](#)

In March, the Project Public Health Ready (PPHR) Workgroup met by conference call to begin work on the annual criteria review and revision process. The workgroup is preparing to address the criteria revisions, and other project issues, at its in-person meeting in May. The PPHR Workgroup is also working on a joint performance measures policy statement with ASTHO, as noted by the POM Workgroup above. NACCHO PPHR staff concluded the call by sharing an update on the beginning of the spring review cycle.

Strategic National Stockpile Workgroup (SNS)

Chair: Joshua Carlyle; **Staff:** [Tim Siemsen](#)

The SNS Workgroup conference call was held on Monday, March 12. The workgroup welcomed Allison Cain, from the CDC, who joined the call to discuss CDC projects including the Second Wednesday Webinars, an upcoming Live Tweeting Town Hall in place of the SNS Summit which will not be held this year, and the SNS Share Point Site. The Share Point site currently has 800 members and is not as active as desired. Chairman Josh Carlyle concluded the meeting the call with a discussion of proposed topics for an additional policy statement, Local Technical Assistance Review (LTAR) best practices, STOCKBox tools and Closed POD tools. The SNS Workgroup submitted a policy statement on anthrax vaccine that was unanimously approved by the NACCHO Board at their March meeting.

Ad Hoc Advisory Groups

Preparedness Policy Advisory Group (PPAG)

Chair: Chris Hoff; Staff: [Resham Patel](#) and [Samantha Morgan](#)

The PPAG held a call on March 12, 2012. The members were provided with updates on the FY 2013 Budget and Appropriations, PAHPA Reauthorizations, the HPP-PHEP Funding Opportunity Announcement, and PPD-8. The workgroup was asked to provide feedback and comment on CDC's OPHPR Strategic Planning Objectives 4 and 5 and on the National Frameworks (PPD-8) that are open for public comment until April 2, 2012. NACCHO is working on developing an online template to collect "stories from the field" from members in areas that have been affected by emergencies. NACCHO will use these stories to promote public health preparedness to our congressional members and/or in NACCHO's preparedness newsletters. The next call will be 3 PM–4 PM, EDT on April 25.

Administrative Preparedness

Staff: [Samantha Morgan](#) and [Scott Fisher](#)

Interviews are underway with the 12 state and 48 local health departments that will provide feedback on both barriers and best practices regarding administrative preparedness practices for accepting, allocating, spending, monitoring, and reporting on federal funding during an emergency. Preliminary findings are anticipated in mid-April.

Project Updates

Advanced Practice Centers (Staff: [Laura Biesiadecki](#))

NACCHO has received approval to award additional funds to the APC sites. Sites are in the process of submitting revised scopes of work and budgets. Preferred projects for the additional funds will be quality improvement on existing products, additional technical assistance to LHDs on use of APC products, and aligning products to PHEP/HPP capabilities. Representatives from the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department APC participated in the CDC seminar series on March 21, 2012. Mesa County APC and San Francisco APC will be presenting to the CDC in April.

Antiviral Dispensing Project (Staff: [Tim Siemsen](#))

ADP Workgroup members participated in the first of two pharmacy antiviral dispensing demonstrations in Independence, Missouri on Saturday and Sunday, March 10 & 11. The second dispensing demonstration will take place in Chicago during the month of June 2012. These pharmacy dispensing demonstrations are a collaboration among ASTHO, NACCHO, and the CDC.

ASPR Project (Staff: [Scott Fisher](#) and [Jack Herrmann](#))

NACCHO and ASPR staff identified topics for upcoming webinars. These anticipated topics are the National Health Security Strategy (NHSS) Implementation Plan in late spring, the use of volunteers during a response to a public health emergency in early summer, and administrative preparedness in late summer. An article by ASPR on the recently released HHS Disaster Behavioral Health Concept of Operations was featured in the March *Preparedness Brief*, which was distributed on March 20, 2012.

Medical Reserve Corps Project (Staff: [Debra Robinson](#))

NACCHO's MRC project is adding three new employees to the team. Tahlia Gousse will begin April 3, 2012 as a Program Analyst. Stacy Holser, Program Analyst will start with the MRC project on April 16 and Justin Snair will fill the vacant Senior Program Analyst position on April 23.

Final preparations are also being made for our NACCHO MRC booth for ITS. We will again pilot the new opportunity training videos during the exposition hours. Videos have been drafted for Basic Proposal Writing, Budgeting Basics, Grants, Cooperative Agreements and the Peer Review Process and Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materials, Leadership, Personnel and Facilities (DOTMLPF), a management and capacity building concept. When finalized, the videos will be available to MRC units, LHDs, and others who are seeking additional information and training on the various topics. These videos are meant to provide the useful information about the topic in a very short period of time, and generally run between 5 and 15 minutes in length.

Work has begun for Project Year 3 of the Cooperative Agreement. We have held preliminary discussions with the DCVMRC Program Office to identify priorities for the upcoming project year and taskings that will be associated with the upcoming work plan.

Nurse Triage Line (NTL) Project (Staff: [Jo Ellen Warner](#))

The primary goals of the NTL Project are to (1) improve access to antiviral prescriptions for ill persons during a severe influenza pandemic; and (2) reduce medical surge and increase appropriate use of medical care resources during a severe pandemic. The project achieved major milestones in March. NACCHO planned and coordinated logistics for the day-long NTL Project Stakeholders Meeting in Atlanta, GA with nearly 100 project partners attending, including representatives from federal, state, and local public health agencies, poison control centers, health insurers, and physician and nursing professional societies. For the NTL project, NACCHO has enlisted the private technology firm, Voxiva, to develop FluCare, a text messaging program intended to support mobile phone users prescribed an antiviral medication in an influenza pandemic. At the NTL meeting in Atlanta, participants signed up to participate in the initial test of FluCare. NACCHO will be evaluating their experience to further inform development of this tool. Also, NACCHO and ASTHO completed the report, *Preliminary Report on the Role of Flu Information and Triage Lines in Reducing Surge in Healthcare Facilities and Increasing Access to Antiviral Medication During the 2009 H1N1 Pandemic*, which looks back at the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic to identify public-health-affiliated poison control centers, NTLs, and other flu lines that were staffed by nurses or other medical professionals to provide information and advice to callers, triage those who were ill, and prescribe antiviral medications over the phone. The paper and presentations from the March 20 meeting will be posted on the NTL pages on the NACCHO website in the Preparedness Program section.

Project Public Health Ready (Staff: [Scott Fisher](#))

In March, NACCHO PPHR staff recruited, selected, oriented, and trained 33 public health preparedness professionals to serve as national reviewers for the 21 applications that have been submitted for the spring 2012 PPHR review cycle. The NACCHO PPHR staff team continues to provide technical assistance to LHDs from Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin as they prepare PPHR applications for this spring and next fall. In addition, NACCHO PPHR staff updated several online technical assistance documents for current and interested applicants, as well as reviewers.

Public Health Preparedness Law Project (Staff: [Scott Fisher](#))

Final edits are currently being made to Public Health and the Law: An Emergency Preparedness Training Kit. The kit will begin to be distributed in April. NACCHO and ASTHO developed a plan to cross-promote NACCHO's kit with legal preparedness resources that ASTHO will be distributing in the same timeframe.

Radiological and Nuclear Preparedness Project (Staff: [Tim Siemsen](#))

No update.

Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) (Staff: [Tim Siemsen](#))

A policy statement regarding anthrax vaccine was reviewed and approved by the NACCHO Board of Directors on March 16, 2012.

Government Affairs Update (Staff: [Laura Hanen](#))

FY2013 Funding

On March 14, NACCHO's Board of Directors and SACCHOs went to Capitol Hill to meet with 90 House and Senate offices, including House and Senate leadership. NACCHO's FY2013 appropriations priorities were the topic of the visits at a key time when Members of Congress were weighing in with Appropriations Committee leadership on their funding priorities. NACCHO has prioritized PHEP in its FY2013 funding request of Congress and is asking that the program be

restored to its FY2010 funding level of \$715 million. NACCHO is asking Congress to reject the President’s proposal to eliminate the separate PHEP funding line authorized by *the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act of 2006*. NACCHO is also asking for \$12.6 million for MRC units and \$426 million for HPP, which was cut by \$120 million in the President’s budget. Please see NACCHO’s [fact sheet](#) on FY2013 preparedness funding.

Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Reauthorization Act Passed by the Senate

The Senate passed the *Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act Reauthorization of 2011* ([S.1855](#)) on March 7 through the expedited process of unanimous consent. The House of Representatives passed their bill, [H.R. 2405](#), on December 6, 2011. The differences between the two versions of the bills must be reconciled among House and Senate staff before returning to the chambers for final passage. NACCHO will continue to weigh-in with staff as negotiations get underway.

Future Activities/Meetings/Conferences/Workshops

National Homeland Security Consortium Meeting (Washington, DC)	May 2–3, 2012
DGMQ Airport Project Final Meeting (Atlanta)	May (TBD)
Antiviral Dispensing Meeting (Atlanta)	May 8, 2012
Project Public Health Ready National Review Meeting (Austin, TX)	May 8–9, 2012
Project Public Health Ready Workgroup Meeting (Austin, TX)	May 10–11, 2012
2012 Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness and Response Training Summit (Nashville, TN)	May 21–25, 2012
Antiviral Pharmacy Dispensing Demonstration (Chicago)	June 23–24, 2012