

Building Strategy, Capacity, and Engagement

Leveraging the HAI/AR Implementation Strategy Plan: Enhancing Response Capacity and Strengthening Partnerships

Megan Westcott, MPH
Epidemiologist, Internship Coordinator
West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District

Project Firstline is a national collaborative led by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to provide infection control training and education to frontline healthcare workers and public health personnel. National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is proud to partner with Project Firstline to host the NACCHO Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Summit (Summit), as supported through CDC Grant # 6NU38OT000306-03-05. CDC is an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). This presentation is being hosted as part of the Summit; the contents of this presentation and Summit do not necessarily represent the policies of CDC or HHS and should not be considered an endorsement by the Federal Government.

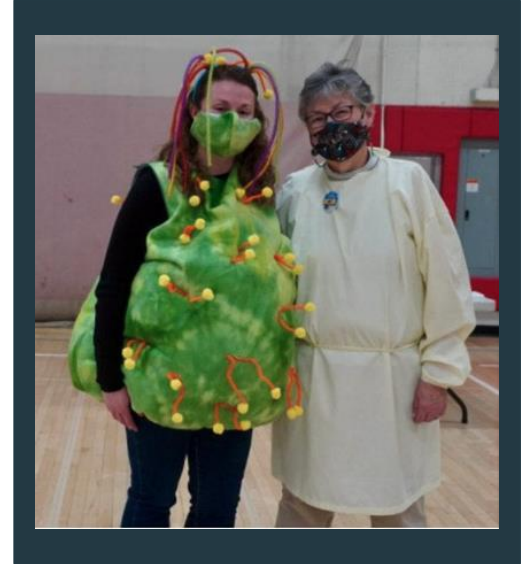


Background

Projects in collaboration with NACCHO:

- BLOC COVID/BLOC COVID+
- HAI/AR Strategy
- BUILD HAI/AR
- IPC Learning Collaborative

Focus is on increasing our internal capacity to respond to and support facility partners with HAIs and outbreaks while strengthening relationships.



LHD HAI/AR Strategy

Utilized the CDC framework for enhancing local health department capacity to respond to HAIs/AR, support facilities, and prevent HAIs/AR



LHD HAI/AR Strategy Plan

- Planning process included regular meetings and collaboration with the WHBHD's epidemiologist, emergency preparedness specialist, and public health nurse
- Building upon previous IPC work, internal needs and training gaps were assessed to identify plan objectives and activities that were both achievable and could have the greatest impact
- Primary goal is to strengthen partnerships to improve collaborative response to HAIs/AR
- These objectives are being achieved through communication, local collaboration, and resource-sharing



Communication



Building partnerships and trust has been accomplished through:

- Maintaining local contact lists for facility partners
 - Increased frequency of communication - consistency is key!
- Hosting CT Coalition Against HAIs quarterly meetings
- Updated internal infectious disease communication plan
- Facilitating communication with facility partners to share guidance, recommendations, and provide support for IPC during and outside of outbreaks
- Engaging facilities in Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICARs) assessments and providing follow-up IPC trainings
 - Emphasis on support

Local Collaboration



- Internal staff training
 - Participated in an outbreak response training with CT DPH
 - Support staff becoming Certified in Infection Control (CIC)
- CT Coalition Against HAIs
- Participation in local and regional workgroups including: CT DPH-led HAI/AR meetings, ESF-8 emergency preparedness, and local health epidemiology workgroup
- Planned: Facilitation of a local measles response tabletop exercise May 10
 - Participation by WHBHD staff
 - Observers from other LHDs, regional ESF-8 members, CT DPH, and NACCHO

Resource-Sharing

- Regularly share resources through the CT Coalition Against HAIs
- Promote Project Firstline materials and utilize in IPC trainings
 - To support infection control and patient safety education and training needs
- Resource development
 - Checklists for GI illness, C. diff, etc.



Outcomes

- Early reporting of cases
- Mitigation of transmission during outbreaks
- Improved relationships with facility partners
- Collaboration with other LHDs across CT
 - Contributes to consistency and standardization
- Time dedicated to these projects and being physically present and available has allowed our team to become familiar, friendly faces



Thank you!

Megan Westcott, MPH

Epidemiologist, Internship Coordinator

West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District

Megan.Westcott@WestHartfordCT.gov

