Background and Methods

NACCHO conducts the Profile study every three years to develop a comprehensive description of local health department (LHD) infrastructure and practice. The 2016 Profile study included a total of 2,533 LHDs in the United States, of which 76% completed the survey.

In the Profile study, NACCHO assesses LHD public health emergency preparedness planning and response activities. For more information about the Profile study, email profileteam@naccho.org.

Key Findings

LHD emergency preparedness efforts involve educating staff and community members

81% LHDs that provide emergency preparedness training to staff

62% LHDs that educate community members on emergency preparedness topics

Almost all LHDs participated in emergency preparedness activities in the past year

Planned for emergencies 93%
Conducted exercises 90%
 Advocated for policy 72%

More LHDs have expanded preparedness and response services since 2014

Reduced services

Expanded services

2014*

2016

16%

17%

11%

5%

LHDs most often engage Medical Reserve Corps volunteers in preparedness activities

2010 2016

Medical Reserve Corps 49% 65%
Community Emergency Response Team 34% 47%
American Red Cross 33% 48%

Do not engage volunteers 7% 15%

Nearly half of LHDs responded to a public health hazard in the past year, such as:

- Natural disasters
- Influenza & other infectious disease outbreaks
- Food-bourne outbreaks

NACCHO Recommendations

- Continue to encourage LHDs to educate staff and the community in emergency preparedness topics
- Explore ways to further support LHDs in expanding emergency planning and policy work
- Share promising practices for utilizing volunteers in local public health emergency preparedness activities
- Identify funding, workforce, and training resources to facilitate LHD response to public health hazards