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Featured Article

Contra Costa County EMS Condensed POD Exercise

Members of the Contra Costa County Medical Reserve Corps participated in a condensed point of dispensing (POD) functional exercise prior to the California Statewide Medical Health Exercise. This exercise tested the capabilities of the MRC unit to provide first responder prophylaxis in the event of an aerosolized anthrax attack. In previous monthly meetings, MRC members were provided education on anthrax, the Strategic National Stockpile, and POD operations to better understand their role during activation.

When an event such as an aerosolized anthrax attack occurs, it is imperative that first responders receive prophylaxis quickly, and prior to the opening of public PODs. The use of a condensed, closed POD - also referred to as a POD strike team - will ensure that medications are distributed to priority first responders and their families. A POD strike team deploys and operates a smaller POD mission at select sites throughout the county. These PODs require less equipment and staff to operate, providing a rapid deployment and meeting the logistical and geographical challenges of the county.

Members were deployed using the Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV) website to one of two POD locations. The exercise objectives were to test the activation, location, set-up, operations, and throughput of a condensed POD. MRC members valued the opportunity to participate in the exercise and training. The unit will use participant feedback and evaluator observations to improve the condensed POD plan and conduct another exercise in the spring.

MRC/NACCHO Connections

2015 Network Profile of the MRC Survey Launched

The 2015 Network Profile of the MRC Survey was launched by NACCHO on January 20th. This comprehensive study is one part of the overall goal to better understand the entire MRC network through research and evaluation programs. We would like to thank those that have already completed the survey.

The information you provide is essential for us to promote the activities and successes of the MRC network and allows us to continue to build a strong and sustainable network for the next 10 years and beyond. If you have not finished it yet, we encourage you to do so by the deadline of March 3rd. Remember that recipients of the Capacity Building Awards (CBAs), Challenge Awards, and NACCHO support to training meetings have agreed (and are expected) to participate in research and evaluation projects.

Please note the survey link is unique for each unit and comes from the email address: noreply@gmailserver.com. It may help to put that email address on your safe sender list.

If you or your unit coordinator have not received a link for the survey or if you have any questions about completing it, please contact Stacy Stanford at mrc@naccho.org or at 202-507-4197.

Announcements

NACCHO Releases National Assessment on Disability Awareness in Local Health Departments

[“National Assessment of the Knowledge, Awareness, and Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Local Health Departments’ Public Health Practices,”](#) a new NACCHO research brief, analyzes a survey of local health departments conducted to explore and better understand inclusion of people with disabilities in programs, products, and services. Approximately 56 million people in the United States live with a disability, and they are often excluded from public health programming and activities.

A total of 159 LHDs nationwide completed the nine-item survey. [Read notable findings.](#) NACCHO will use the survey data to develop a general framework for education, training, and outreach materials to raise local health department awareness of the health inequities experienced by people with disabilities.

CDC Offers Preparedness Training for Local Health Departments

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Strategic National Stockpile (DSNS) has announced its SNS Preparedness Course and Mass Antibiotic Dispensing Train-the-Trainer (MADT) course schedules for federal fiscal year 2014-2015.

The [SNS Preparedness Course](#) is a 3-day “blended” course that includes instruction on the SNS formulary, warehouse operations, distribution methods, and point of dispensing (POD) operations. The SNS Preparedness Course is being held on the following dates during this fiscal year:

- February 18-20, 2015, (registration is now open)
- May 4-6, 2015
- August 10-12, 2015

The [MADT course](#) is designed to prepare state and local public health staff to implement mass dispensing training for their agencies or jurisdictions (course code: AD). Courses are planned for:

- May 27-29, 2015
- August 24-26, 2015

Interested state and local public health preparedness staff can apply through CDP’s [registration system](#). Open season for applications is approximately three months from the start of each course. Courses are free and all travel expenses will be paid for by FEMA for state and local personnel. For questions or issues about the CDP training application, contact CDP Student Services at studentservices@cdpemail.dhs.gov or 866-213-9553.

Measles Outbreak Resources from the CDC

From January 1-23, 68 people from 11 states were reported to have measles, and most of these cases are part of a large, ongoing outbreak linked to an amusement park in California. On January 23, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a Health Advisory to notify local health departments and healthcare facilities about this multi-state outbreak and to provide guidance for healthcare providers nationwide. MRC units should be aware of measles outbreaks in their communities in case they are called upon to assist in a response.

Because many doctors currently in practice may not be familiar with measles signs and symptoms, CDC urges healthcare professionals to consider measles when evaluating patients with febrile rash and ask about a patient’s recent travel history. View recordings about measles, including a [CDC expert commentary](#) and an [archived Immunization NetConference](#) from 2014. For more information, including guidelines for patient evaluation, diagnosis and management, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp/>.



The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice with local health departments.

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Please contact Alyson Jordan, NACCHO’s MRC Communications Specialist, with any questions or suggestions for the newsletter at 202-783-5528 or at ajordan@naccho.org.