



# UPDATE

Report on Public Health Emergency Preparedness in Oregon

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*Coordination between public health and law enforcement during all types of emergencies is the topic of a national workgroup.*

## National Public Health/Law Enforcement Emergency Preparedness Workgroup

- Oregon Public Health Division Director Susan Allan, MD, JD, MPH, and Senior Assistant Attorney General Shannon O'Fallon, JD, are members of a national Department of Justice/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Public Health/Law Enforcement Emergency Preparedness Workgroup.
- The work group is charged with developing a framework for long-term, strengthened coordination between the sectors of public health, law enforcement/corrections, and the judiciary in relation to pandemic influenza, bioterrorism, and other all-hazards emergencies. It also will develop two model protocols involving public health/law enforcement emergency coordination—one on joint bioterrorism investigations, and the other on coordinated responses to threats like pandemic influenza.
- The first meeting was in June in Washington, D.C. The second meeting took place Nov. 8 and 9 in Chicago. A final meeting is scheduled for February 2008.



*Oregon's Laboratory Response Network (LRN) plays a crucial role in emergency preparedness, and Oregon recently played host to the national LRN conference.*

#### **National Laboratory Response Network Partners in Preparedness Conference**

- Oregon hosted the national Laboratory Response Network Partners in Preparedness Conference Sept. 10-12 in Portland. Conference attendees were welcomed by Oregon State Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL) Director Mike Skeels, PHD, MPH.
- Oregon Public Health Division Director Susan Allan, MD, JD, MPH, presented a session on *"Lessons Learned in the New Era of Terrorism,"* on the second day of the conference.
- OSPHL General Microbiology Manager Rob Vega, MS, SM (AAM) served on the planning committee and presented a breakout session on *"Outreach to Sentinel Laboratories."*
- OSPHL Chemical Terrorism Laboratory Coordinator Eric Clark presented a breakout session on *"Chemical Terrorism Preparedness Exercises."*

#### **NW Area Tribal Emergency Preparedness Conference**

- Key Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program (PHEP) staff from both the CDC and Hospital Preparedness Program grants attended the 4<sup>th</sup> annual

Northwest Area Tribal Emergency Preparedness Conference on Aug. 9 and 10 in Portland.

- Oregon Public Health Division Director Susan Allan, MD, JD, MPH, started the conference with her keynote address, *"Are We Prepared-And For What?"*
- PHEP Manager Mike Harryman, BSB/M, provided an overview of *"Oregon Public Health Emergency Preparedness: State and Tribes All Hazard Planning Efforts."*
- Oregon's Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Coordinator Kathy Scott, DrPH, and Washington's SNS Coordinator David Owens provided a session on *"Pharmaceutical Stockpiles and Mass Dispensing."*
- Theresa McGivern and Terry Crandall from the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory presented a session on *"Lab Preparedness and Response Across Borders."*
- PHEP Liaison Carey Palm and Charles Haller II facilitated an Oregon state/tribal breakout session.

#### **Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Consultation Panel**

- PHEP Public Information Coordinator Christie Holmgren, BA, APR, has been selected to participate on a national panel to assist the CDC in continuing to refine and enhance its Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) training series.
- Holmgren is a CDC-certified CERC trainer and has provided this training to more than 500 public health, hospital and emergency response partners in Oregon over the past five years.
- The panel will identify best CERC practices, assist with developing new training modules and provide backup for CERC training requests.
- The first meeting of the panel took place in early December in Atlanta.



*Emergency response public information officers learned about communicating with the public at Strategic National Stockpile distribution points during a recent training in Portland.*

#### **Mass Antibiotic Dispensing: Public Information and Communication**

- Approximately 40 public health, hospital and emergency response partner public information officers from throughout Oregon attended the “*Mass Antibiotic Dispensing: Public Information and Communication*” workshop in Portland on Nov. 6.
- The workshop, which was sponsored by the CDC, PHEP and the Cities Readiness Initiative, featured Laura Ross and Ruth Thornburg, two communication specialists from the CDC’s Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) program.
- Participants learned about the role of public information in an event where the assets of the SNS are deployed, including special emphasis on communicating with the public at Points of Dispensing.
- The SNS is a cache of medicines and medical supplies and equipment that can be deployed anywhere in the country within 12 hours of a state’s request for these assets.
- Kathy Scott, DrPH, Oregon’s SNS Coordinator, accepted an invitation to be

a member of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) SNS Advisory Group.

#### **HHS Region 10 ESF 8 Federal-State Partners Meeting**

- During the U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Region 10 (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington) Emergency Support Function 8 (health and medical) Federal-State Partners Meeting in Seattle in September, PHEP Manager Mike Harryman, BSB/M, provided an update on planning efforts for the Top Officials 4 exercise.
- Region 10 staff provided information on lessons learned when they were deployed as an Incident Response Coordination Team to assist Region 6 (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas) in responding to Hurricane Dean.

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Directors of Public Health Preparedness Conference**

- PHEP Manager Mike Harryman, BSB/M, and Jere High, ND, BS, Healthcare Systems Manager attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Directors of Public Health Preparedness Conference, Sept. 18-20, in New Orleans. The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) sponsors the conference.
- This year both Susan True, Branch Chief, Division of State and Local Readiness, from the Coordinating Office for Terrorism Preparedness and Emergency Response (COTPER) at the CDC, and Melissa Sanders, CDR, USPHS, Team Leader, Hospital Preparedness Program and their staffs were on hand to provide updates on grant guidance issues.
- The conference included a tour of rebuilding efforts underway in the city, however, Harryman noted that one area that is not currently being rebuilt is the 9<sup>th</sup> Ward, which still looks as if the storm and water left by Hurricane Katrina just happened.



### FEMA Announces Members of Regional Advisory Council

- PHEP Manager Mike Harryman, BSB/M, is among four recently appointed members of the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Regional Advisory Council.
- The primary goal of the council is to improve communication and understanding among the various organizations involved in emergency management and response.
- Members will review preparedness, protection, response, recovery and mitigation programs and policies to identify weaknesses and recommend improvements.
- Other Oregon members are MG Raymond Rees, Adjutant General, State of Oregon; Ken Murphy, Director, Oregon Office of Emergency Management; and Bob Leopold, Director, Oregon Emergency Medical Services.



### Multnomah County Recognized for Exemplary Pandemic Preparedness Plan

- Multnomah County is among four communities recently recognized by the American Medical Association (AMA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for their exemplary pandemic influenza preparedness planning processes.
- The recognition stems from planning partnerships focusing on the use of non-pharmaceutical interventions in an influenza pandemic. The group that accepted the award included Multnomah County Health Department, Hacienda Community Development Corporation, Multnomah Education Service District and Portland State University.

### Online Training Resource for Nurses

- The National Nurse Emergency Preparedness Initiative (NNEPI) recently launched "*Nurses on the Front Line: Preparing for and Responding to Emergencies and Disasters*" at <http://www.nnepi.org/>. The site, funded by the Department of Homeland Security and supported by George Washington University, provides online training and resources for nurses.

### Webinar: Antiviral Use & Distribution Planning for Pandemic Influenza

- Washington County Health and Human Services Emergency Preparedness Coordinator/Communicable Diseases Program Supervisor Sue Landre, presented her county's antiviral distribution and prioritization preparedness plan during an Oct. 23 Webinar hosted by the National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO), CDC, and Roche.
- Entitled "*Antiviral Use, Distribution, Prioritization, Ethics, and Equity*," an archived version of the Webinar is available at <http://webcasts.naccho.org/session.php?id=947>

### Hospital Preparedness Program Funding

- Oregon hospitals and health care systems will receive \$2.1 million in federal funding from the Hospital Preparedness Program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services this year to improve readiness and response in the event of bioterrorism and other public health emergencies.
- The funding will be distributed under a new partnership between the Oregon Department of Human Services and Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems (OAHHS). The contract to distribute the money was put in place in September shortly after the FY07 federal notice of grant award.

- The money will be used to help implement statewide hospital preparedness program goals. Current priority areas include interoperable communication systems, hospital bed tracking system, medical volunteer system, fatality management planning and hospital evacuation planning.
- During the past five years the federal funds have been used to improve bed and personnel surge capacity, decontamination capabilities, isolation capacity, pharmaceutical supplies, training, education, drills and exercises.
- Oregon uses advisory groups and consults with communities in setting strategies and specific priorities.

### **Pandemic Influenza Planning**

- Based on the CDC's *"Interim Pre-Pandemic Planning Guidance: Community Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Mitigation in the United States,"* public health planners Michael Kubler, M.S., and Julie Plagenhoef, M.P.H., are making strides in community mitigation and antiviral distribution planning for pandemic influenza. The guidance is available on-line at: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/mitigation.html>
- Thirty-three out of 34 Oregon health departments participated in seven regional preliminary antiviral distribution planning meetings conducted by PHEP from May through August. The meetings included local health department emergency preparedness coordinators, Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) regional coordinators, and emergency preparedness liaisons.
- A workgroup is being formed to make recommendations regarding some key antiviral distribution issues, and to produce an antiviral distribution plan template for counties. It is anticipated

that workgroup members will include representatives from local health departments, pharmacists and physicians.

- Planning continues with the Oregon Department of Education, and a draft cancellation of classes component has been added to the State Pandemic Influenza Plan. Additionally, Kubler and Plagenhoef have initiated conversations with private schools and have presented information at the annual meeting of the Oregon Federation of Independent Schools and Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children Conference Oct. 12 and 13 in Portland.
- Benton County recently conducted a regional tabletop exercise to promote discussion between local public health and their school district partners. Similar exercises are scheduled for Multnomah, Marion, Clatsop and other counties.

### **Laboratory Preparedness Exercise**

- Forty-one Advanced Sentinel Laboratories in Oregon participated in an October Laboratory Preparedness Exercise that was developed as a collaborative effort between the College of American Pathologists, the Center for Disease Control and prevention and the Association of Public Health Laboratories and supported by the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement.
- The exercise tested the preparedness of laboratories across the U.S. to handle potential public health emergencies related to bioterrorism agents. Select Oregon clinical, environmental and veterinary laboratories have been participating in these challenge survey exercises since 2003. The results of the exercises provide educational opportunities and specific follow-up exercises for these key laboratories supporting Oregon's preparedness initiatives.



*Public Health Division Clinical Epidemiologist Barb Progulske, DVM, MPH, DACVPM, discusses HPAI avian influenza cases worldwide.*

### **Avian Influenza Workshops**

- A series of workshops and tabletop exercises on “*Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Animal Emergency*” were presented across the state in late November and early December in Baker City, Bend, Woodburn and Roseburg. PHD Clinical Epidemiologist Barb Progulske, DVM, MPH, DACVPM, led the workshops along with representatives of the Oregon and U.S. departments of agriculture.
- The goal of the workshops was to familiarize participants with the role of public health in a multi-agency response to an outbreak of avian influenza in birds. The training is funded through a grant from the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists.
- The series of workshops will culminate in a one-day Joint Information Center training and functional exercise based on an avian influenza scenario in January.

### **Behavioral Health Plan Orientations**

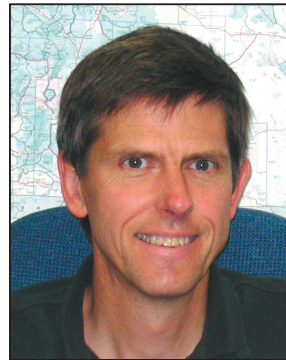
- Five orientations to the Oregon Behavioral Health All-Hazards Emergency Response Plan and Field Guide were held around the state in October and November. Workshops were held in Portland, Baker City, Medford, John Day and Salem.
- Participants included local Community Mental Health Program directors and disaster preparedness coordinators,

addiction services staff, local PHEP emergency preparedness coordinators, local emergency managers, fire department chaplains, Red Cross Disaster Mental Health team members, Department of Justice Victims Assistance team members, Hospital Preparedness Program regional coordinators and hospital mental health staff.

- The trainings provided an overview of the basic concepts of behavioral health emergency response, including relevant roles and responsibilities.
- The workshops were sponsored by the DHS Addictions & Mental Health Division and facilitated by DHS Behavioral Health Planning Consultant Laurel Hughes.

### **Lewis’ Role Expanded**

- The role of OPHD Epidemiologist Paul Lewis, MD, has recently expanded to include policy coordination for all public health emergency preparedness activities. Lewis will be working closely with Mike Harryman, Oregon Public Health Emergency Preparedness Manager, who is responsible for management of PHEP program activities and staff, contracts, and management of the federal grants.
- In his expanded role, Lewis also will work closely in advisory and consultation roles with Oregon Public Health Director Susan Allan, MD, JD, MPH, and with the leadership of the Public Health Division and the Conference of Local Health Officials on policy development and coordination of the CDC cooperative preparedness agreements and the Hospital Preparedness Program grant.
- Policy challenges include identifying priority areas for funding and activities to ensure that Oregon has a functional system for responding to health and



health emergency preparedness activities. Lewis will be working closely with Mike Harryman, Oregon Public Health Emergency Preparedness Manager, who is responsible for



medical emergencies; strategically adjusting allocation of diminishing federal funding; and strengthening coordination among public health agencies, hospitals and other healthcare providers.

- Lewis joined the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program in the epidemiology group in early 2004 after eight years as a clinician and hospital epidemiologist at OHSU. In early 2005 he took a lead role in developing the state pandemic influenza plan and began a broad outreach to clinicians, hospitals, and other partners about this threat. He provided leadership in the creation and development of the Medical Advisory Group (MAG), which met monthly from October 2006 until May 2007, and will continue to meet quarterly.

### **Vulnerable Populations Workshops**

- Bill Riley, DHS/PHEP Vulnerable Populations Project manager is facilitating a series of regional workshops designed to give human service organizations an opportunity to plan for disasters together with their county emergency management systems.
- The first daylong workshop was held in Baker City on Oct. 30, and included participants from eight eastern Oregon counties. The second workshop was held in Portland on Nov. 7 for the metro-area counties. Additional workshops are planned in other areas of the state.
- Each workshop includes county emergency managers, local health department emergency preparedness coordinators, PHEP regional liaisons, representatives from childcare, developmental disabilities, mental health, alcohol and drug programs, community health, Aging and Disabilities Services, DHS Children, Adults and Families; and Seniors and People with Disabilities Divisions.
- The participants demonstrated support for strong, joint planning initiatives to help

assure that vulnerable populations are prepared for a disaster. The workshops emphasize personal emergency preparedness planning and inclusion of clients served by the department in an emergency preparedness plan.

### **Oregon State Pharmacy Association Annual Conference**

- Oregon Public Health Division Director Susan Allan, MD, JD, MPH, and Epidemiologist Paul Lewis, MD, presented "*Mass Prophylaxis and Urgent Treatment: The Pharmacist and Public Health Emergencies*," during the Oregon State Pharmacy Association Annual Conference Sept. 14-16 in Salem.

### **Local Public Health Authority Preparedness Program Annual Review**

- Oregon's tool for reviewing local health department emergency preparedness planning has been recognized by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) as a Promising Practice and posted on their Web site at: <http://www.astho.org/pubs/PromisingPracticesMainPage.html>
- Local plans are reviewed annually by peers in at least two neighboring counties. The process documents integration of local public health emergency plans into county emergency management plans.

### **New E-Learning Courses**

- Two new online courses, "*Working with Interpreters in a Public Health Setting*," and "*Introduction to Communicable Disease and Epidemiology*," are available by logging onto the DHS Learning Center at: <https://dhslearn.hr.state.or.us>. Register for either "PHEP - Interpreters" (Course #C00338) or "PHEP - Epi" (Course #C00337).
- Another new online course, "*Introduction to Outbreak Investigation*," will be released in early December. This course is ideal for anyone working in the

communicable disease field.

- Foundational Incident Command System (ICS) courses also can be taken through the DHS Learning Center. These courses include:
  - IS 100 - *Introduction to Incident Command Systems (ICS)*, Course #C00065
  - IS 200 - *ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents*, Course #C00066
  - IS 700 – *National Incident Management Systems*, Course #C00063
  - IS 800 – *National Response Plan Introduction*, Course #C00064.

### Annual Oregon Public Health Workforce Development Conference

- The Annual Oregon Public Health Workforce Development Conference will take place March 3-5, 2008 in the Portland area.
- The conference will include sessions on *“Intermediate Epidemiologic Concepts and Methods,”* with Victoria Holt, RN, MPH, PhD; *“Leadership, Development: Skills, Styles, Attitudes,”* with Bud Nicola, MD, MHSA; *“Program Planning and Evaluation,”* with Luann D’Ambrosio, MEd and Carl Osaki, RS, MSPH; *“Building Effective Teams and Cross Agency Collaboration,”* with Jeremy Sappington, MSPH; and *“Tribal Issues, Cultural Understanding, and Closing Ceremony,”* with Vanessa Short Bull, BA, and Jay LaPlante, BA.
- Registration is available through the DHS Learning Center at: <https://dhslearn.hr.state.or.us>

### New Staff

- **Kathy Coyne** has joined the PHEP staff as an administrative assistant working with the Hospital Preparedness Program and Vulnerable Populations Project. Prior to coming to DHS, Kathy

worked as a legal assistant. Kathy has a bachelor of arts degree from Washington State University and is working toward a master’s degree in counseling/psychology.

- **Nick May** recently joined the PHEP staff as the Health Alert Network (HAN) administrator. Prior to coming to DHS, he was involved in training development and technical writing for Automatic Data Processing (ADP) for the eight years. Nick will work closely with system administrators at the local, state, tribal, and hospital levels to ensure the HAN system is being used, exercised and updated.
- **Michelle Tworoger** has joined PHEP as an administrative assistant, providing support to the planning section. Before coming to DHS, she worked at the Housing Authority of Portland for 11 years. She was an advocate and worked extensively with the GOALS program (Greater Opportunities to Advance, Learn & Succeed).



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[http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/preparedness/phep\\_newsletter\\_index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/preparedness/phep_newsletter_index.shtml)

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