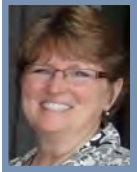




MDH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE NEWS

APRIL 2016



From the Director

Happy Spring to you all.

Having heard from the CDC that we would be experiencing a cut in our PHEP award, we now know that Minnesota will need to adapt to reductions of about 7% from the PHEP base grant and 10% from the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI). This cut was as much of a shock to MDH as it is to you. We all share the goal of minimizing the impact of these reductions so that we don't lose the expertise and capacity that we have built in our communities. Minnesota's public health system and all its partners are a strong and resilient group. We will do all we can to ensure that we remain ready to respond when the next public health threat emerges.

Emergency Preparedness Partner Success Story: On March 24, a Canadian Pacific train struck a truck filled with propane in the city of Callaway, MN. The 250 residents of the town and those in close proximity were evacuated as a precaution. The White Earth tribal emergency manager Ed Snetsinger was tasked to bring in resources to assist with the incident. With support from the White Earth Home Health staff, the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army, a church quickly became a place where responders could receive hydration, food, and rest. Responders were on scene for more than 20 hours; 21 fire departments, eight law enforcement agencies and three ambulance services answered the call for assistance.

I invite you all to embrace spring with me as we close out our current grant year, and look forward to our next year and planning ahead for the next project period.

Cheryl

"THIS IS AN EXERCISE"

Over 200 local, regional and state agencies from across Minnesota participated in the March 29th full-scale exercise starting and ending phone calls, emails and other messages with the phrase "this is an exercise". The scenario was a series of tornadoes and high-wind events across the state that forced the closure and evacuation of three major hospitals. Much was learned as a result of this exercise both from the exercise design and implementation perspective and from a communication and coordination perspective. Planning and implementing a statewide, full-scale exercise involving public health and healthcare was very challenging. Overall, the exercise met the objectives but many good ideas on how to improve such an exercise in the future were also identified.

While we are still analyzing the information received from our evaluators and from the after-exercise hot washes, several themes have emerged. Most hospitals found the exercise to be helpful at whatever level they were playing. Capacity requirements needs to be an important deliverable for web-based communication and resource tracking programs. Both of the web-based programs used during this exercise failed to work as expected. Many communications processes worked well, but

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From the Director, "THIS IS AN EXERCISE ...", MDH Takes Crucial Planning Steps to Avoid Spread of Zika Infection, Preparedness Apps for Mobile Devices, Meet the Staff, Important Dates

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“This is an Exercise ...”

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several communication pathways need further development, such as communication between regional healthcare coalitions and coordination between MDH and the healthcare coalitions for information requests of from hospitals. Finally, more exercising with EMS, especially in coordination of EMS resources real-time, was identified as a development area .

MDH Takes Crucial Planning Steps to Avoid Spread of Zika Infection



While Minnesota is considered a low risk state for local Zika virus transmission, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) developed plans to protect the citizens of the state from Zika disease. This plan is based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) which includes a detailed communication plan to inform the public and health providers of prevention measures that can be taken against Zika transmission. For example, travelers from Minnesota to any Zika outbreak areas should understand precautions against mosquitoes and to avoid the trip if pregnant. Providers should be aware of the latest information on the outbreak, diagnosis and testing, and resources to offer to patients.

MDH is facilitating patient testing for Zika – including screening test requests from providers and sending specimens to CDC for testing – and following up on all Zika cases to obtain important data including detailed travel histories. MDH is prepared to work with the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District to investigate any possible local transmission of Zika virus in the very unlikely event that may occur.

For more information, visit the MDH Zika Virus page (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/zika/index.html>).



Preparedness Apps for Mobile Devices

CDC Mobile App

The CDC mobile application puts health information at your fingertips. It features important health articles, disease of the week, current outbreaks, popular journals, timely updates, and access to social media. Wherever you go, you'll have 24/7 access to important and timely health information that you can use to protect yourself and loved ones.

This free app is available for download on iOS, Android and Windows 8 tablets :

<http://www.cdc.gov/mobile/applications/cdcgeneral/promos/cdcmobileapp.html>

Meet the Staff



Rachel Schulman—CRI/MCM Coordinator

Rachel Schulman is the new CRI/MCM Coordinator in Emergency Preparedness and Response. She comes to MDH from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) in Washington, DC, where she supported local health department preparedness efforts including all-hazards emergency planning, chemical preparedness, and collaboration with emergency management partners. Prior to NACCHO, Rachel worked for the Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Emergency Management and for the health care team at the U.S. Government Accountability Office.



Alexandra Bambrick—Healthcare Ebola & Emerging Infections Planner

Alex/Lexie is the new Healthcare Ebola & Emerging Infections Planner. Originally from Baltimore, she has a penchant for travel and has visited 46 states and over 20 countries (her siblings have traveled even more)! An ICU RN by trade, she volunteered in Haiti post-earthquake. After completing her MPH in DC, worked with both the American Red Cross and ASPR. Most recently, she worked for the Rwandan MOH in their Human Resources for Health Program teaching nursing and consulting on hospital accreditation compliance.

Important Dates

May 4, 2016----- South Central Emergency Preparedness Conference ----- Mankato ---- gingrich.lavida@mayo.edu

May 17-18, 2016-----Under One Roof Conference----- Duluth----- <http://www.underonerooftwinports.com/>

May 25-26, 2016----Southwest Healthcare Preparedness ----- Morton ----- Rebecca.jurrens@rice.willmar.mn.us
Coalition Infectious Disease & Ebola Tabletop Exercise