

Center Spotlight



At the North Carolina Institute for Public Health

A quarterly newsletter highlighting NCCPHP activities and accomplishments

January-March 2005

Welcome to the first edition of the Center Spotlight, a quarterly electronic publication designed to let you know what's going on at the North Carolina Center for Public Health Preparedness.

As we complete the first six months of our new grant period, our Training Web Site continues to grow in popularity and we're hard at work to assist several local and state public health agencies in identifying their needs for training and develop training plans.

Here at UNC, Team Epi-Aid recently received a public service award for its work with North Carolina state and local public health departments. Read on to learn more, and don't forget to check out our latest publications and mentions in news articles.

---Pia MacDonald, NCCPHP Director

Surveillance & Epidemiology

Team Epi-Aid (SPH student volunteers to assist the state with outbreak investigations)

Team Epi-Aid received the 2005 Office of the Provost Award for its work in responding to immediate health crises as they arise in the state of North Carolina, specifically its aid to the victims of Hurricane Isabel. This award is given to UNC-Chapel Hill units and student organizations that have performed extraordinary public service and/or enabled such service by others.

Kim Swanson was selected as the winner of the 2005 Team Epi-Aid Award. This award goes to the Team Epi-Aid member who has contributed the most hours of service in the past year, and includes a paid trip to the 54th Annual Scientific Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Kim has assisted with the Cherokee County Legionella outbreak, the Hurricane Charley Rapid Needs Assessment, and several other projects since the inception of Team Epi-Aid.

Articles Published

MacDonald PM, Whitwam RE, Boggs JD, et al. Outbreak of Listeriosis among Mexican Immigrants as a Result of Consumption of Illicitly Produced Mexican-Style Cheese. *Clinical Infectious Diseases*. 2005;40:677-682.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Transmission of Hepatitis B Virus Among Persons Undergoing Blood Glucose Monitoring in Long-Term-Care Facilities - Mississippi, North Carolina, and Los Angeles County, California, 2003-2004. *MMWR*. March 11, 2005;54:220-223. [Team Epi-Aid student Ann Chelminski named as author, Pia MacDonald named in acknowledgements.]

Training & Education

Training Web Site

During the first quarter of 2005, the NCCPHP Training Web Site saw 949 new registered users and 1,345 new completed trainings. NCCPHP developed 33 new Web-based distance learning modules in 2004, and 5 more new modules to date in 2005:

- Global Public Health Concerns
- Zoonotic Diseases and Public Health
- Laboratory Diagnostics in Public Health Surveillance
- Medical Terminology and Abbreviations
- HIPAA: An Overview of HIPAA and the Privacy Rule

We also posted 3 new resources for trainers: "Detectives in the Classroom" (online modules in basic epidemiology) and 2 community awareness and response resources in Spanish developed by the North Carolina Community College System.

FOCUS on Field Epidemiology periodical

NCCPHP released 3 new issues of *FOCUS*:

- Volume 2, Issue 2: Developing a Questionnaire
- Volume 1, Issue 4 en Español: Case-Finding and Line Listing
- Volume 1, Issue 5 en Español: Epidemic Curves Ahead (and *FOCUS* Flash: Step-by-step instructions for creating an epi curve in Microsoft Excel)

Online Certificate in Field Epidemiology

We presented information about the program to the CDC Office of Workforce and Career Development and the executive director of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists.

New Graduate-Level Epidemiology Course

NCCPHP launched the pilot of the online course: Field Epidemiology Methods in January.

Introduction to Communicable Disease Surveillance and Investigation training course

The spring 2005 training began on February 1 with 58 communicable disease nurses from local health departments across North Carolina.

A total of 58 nurses completed the fall 2004 pilot course. We summarized data from student pre-tests/post-tests and evaluations, and course instructors met to debrief and make improvements to the pilot course. The class was well received by participants, and feedback was overwhelmingly positive; one nurse even commented, "This should be a requirement for all communicable disease staff."

NCCPHP in the News

Online Certificate in Field Epidemiology Available in Fall 2005. *North Carolina's PHRST Line Report.* Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response quarterly newsletter. 2005; 3(1), 7.

Team Epi-Aid at work. *Impact: a quarterly newsletter.* The North Carolina Institute for Public Health. February 2005.

Online class trains NC health workers in communicable disease response. *Impact: a quarterly newsletter.* The North Carolina Institute for Public Health. February 2005.

Service W and Smith M. Legionellosis Outbreak in Cherokee County, North Carolina. *Epi Notes.* North Carolina Division of Public Health, Epidemiology Section quarterly newsletter. December 2004-February 2005; page 2. [Team Epi-Aid assisted with investigation.]

Goode B. Outbreak of E.coli 0157:H7 at the North Carolina State Fair-2004. *Epi Notes.* (North Carolina Division of Public Health, Epidemiology Section quarterly newsletter). December 2004-February 2005; page 3. [Team Epi-Aid assisted with investigation.]

Lifelong Learning

NCCPHP staff began providing assistance to North Carolina counties in workforce development and lifelong learning activities based on data from the workforce assessment completed in October 2004. Assistance with lifelong learning and training plan development provided to 10 North Carolina counties: Alamance, Buncombe, Cabarrus, Carteret, Chatham, Cherokee, Gaston, New Hanover/Coastal AHEC, Northampton, and Wilkes. Future visits are scheduled to Catawba and Hertford counties.

We also supplied information about our training resources to PHRST 6 and Greensboro AHEC, and provided technical assistance with use of the online Public Health Workforce Development System to users in Buncombe, Cabarrus, Carteret, Chatham, Northampton, Onslow, Orange, and Wilkes Counties.

Work with Partner States

NCCPHP is participating in Pilot Year II Project Public Health Ready (a collaboration between NACCHO and the CDC to prepare the staff of local governmental public health agencies to respond to emergencies and protect the public's health via a competency-based training and recognition program).

Tennessee

We assisted "Lentz University" at the Nashville/Davidson County Metropolitan Health Department with Public Health Ready Certification requirements: distributed and collected assessment (N=500), completed data analysis, developed an assessment report and training plan, and submitted the report and plan to the health department.

Virginia

We are presenting a 5-part videoconference training series, *E is for Epi: Epidemiology Basics for Non-Epidemiologists* via PHIN videoconference network in Danville and 22 satellite sites in health districts statewide. Three 2-hour sessions have been presented to date: "Epidemiology in the Context of Public Health" on January 12, "An Epidemiologist's Tool Kit" on February 3, and "Descriptive and Analytic Epidemiology" on March 3.

West Virginia

We completed the Statewide Public Health Preparedness Training Plan for the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health and distributed it to the state preparedness director for review, input, and further distribution to key stakeholders.

Other States

California: NCCPHP provided assistance to an epidemiologist in Riverside County seeking materials to use in developing training for epidemiologists in Mono and Inyo counties.

Colorado: We corresponded with the Department of Public Health and Environment regarding competency-matched training database and supplied data as per their request.

Florida: We sent links to the Training Web Site and the Public Health Workforce Development System to local health directors in 5 counties.

Kansas: We are providing field epidemiology training for 10 state-level epidemiologists.

Texas: We completed an assessment for Public Health Ready Certification and delivered the names of individuals from Texas already using the Public Health Workforce Development System.

Work with CPHP Network Partners

To share resources and expertise with other Centers for Public Health Preparedness, NCCPHP staff are participating in the following CPHP exemplar and collaborative groups:

- Principal Investigators / Coordinators
- Distance Learning Preparedness Education
- GIS for Preparedness and Response
- Graduate Student Epidemiology Response Programs
- Field Epidemiology for Surge/Outbreak Response
- Infectious Disease / Bioterrorism Preparedness
- Local Health Department Tools
- Media/Journalist Preparedness Education
- Nurse Preparedness Education
- Preparedness and Crisis Leadership Education
- Preparedness Education Evaluation Methods
- Public Health Preparedness Exercises and Drills
- Public Health Preparedness Certification
- Public Health Law and Legal Preparedness

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