

# Center Spotlight



At the North Carolina Institute for Public Health

*A quarterly newsletter highlighting NCCPHP activities and accomplishments*

*July-September 2005*

**Welcome!** to new APC Conference coordinator Carol Gunther-Mohr, and new graduate assistants Andrew Edmonds, Cindi Snider, and Phillip Summers.

## NCCPHP's Response to Hurricane Katrina

NCCPHP offered a wide range of support to the response to Hurricane Katrina, providing expert advice and training, coordinating volunteers, and helping public health students displaced from Tulane and other universities.

Assistant Director Jennifer Horney directed the expertise and capacity working group at the University of North Carolina School of Public Health. NCCPHP provided the School with hurricane response resources for its website, and worked to coordinate School response efforts with those of other public health partners such as the Carolina Center for Public Service, NC Public Health Regional Surveillance Teams, the NC Office of Public Health Preparedness & Response, the Association of Schools of Public Health, the CDC, and other Centers for Public Health Preparedness across the nation.

NCCPHP recruited 32 student volunteers through Team Epi-Aid, who worked with Wake County shelters and the North Carolina state health department. NCCPHP leadership also worked to ease the transition for students displaced by the hurricane by agreeing to serve as the advisor for a Humphrey Fellow displaced from Tulane and arranging volunteer housing for five students now attending the UNC School of Public Health.

Radio interviews with Horney on the public health impacts of flooding and hurricanes were broadcast on WCHL and XM Satellite Radio 169. NCCPHP representatives also attended a Hurricane Katrina Forum hosted by the UNC General Alumni Association and presented Team Epi-Aid and the School's response to Katrina at the Frank Porter Graham Student Union.

## Publications

**Lesneski CD**, Upshaw VM, Pullen NC, Terrell AL. "The MAPP Training Program Evaluation." *J Public Health Manage Practice*. Sep/Oct 2005; 11(5):448-452.

**Pfau S**, et al. *Academic Health Department Report Executive Summary*. 2005. Chapel Hill: UNC Printing Services.

## Presentations

"Using a learning management system to develop public health and preparedness training." Poster presented at NACCHO/ASTHO Annual Conference. July 13, 2005.

Exhibit of NCCPHP resources. Presented at Tennessee Public Health Association Annual Meeting, Nashville, TN. September 14-15, 2005.

(Presentations Continued)

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## Surveillance & Epidemiology

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

The new school year is off to a good start, with 22 new student volunteers attending the fall Team Epi-Aid orientation on September 1 at the School of Public Health.

Team Epi-Aid activities this quarter included training and conducting interviews for the North Carolina Division of Public Health's Falls Lake recreational water study, conducting interviews for a Salmonella outbreak in Mitchell County, and participation in the North Carolina AIDS stakeholders meeting. In addition, 5 students prepared to travel to the North Carolina coast as volunteers for a later-cancelled Hurricane Ophelia rapid needs assessment coordinated with the North Carolina Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response and Public Health Rapid Surveillance Teams 3 and 6.

### NACCHO Foodborne Illness Grant

NCCPHP is coordinating a NACCHO-funded grant project titled "Foodborne Illness Systems Demonstration Project: Improving reporting of foodborne diseases for the passive surveillance system in North Carolina." NCCPHP will be working in partnership with North Carolina PHRST Region 6 to develop training modules and analyze survey results. Four other centers across the nation are funded by this grant, including 2 in Connecticut, 1 in Minnesota, and 1 in Illinois.

Exhibit of NCCPHP resources. Presented at West Virginia Public Health Association Annual Meeting. Wheeling, WV. September 21-22, 2005.

#### Alexander LA.

"Development of a Training Web Site for Public Health Professionals, a Continuing Education Internet/Classroom Course for Public Health Nurses, and an Online Certificate Program in Field Epidemiology." Presented at Public Health Training Network Distance Learning Summit. Atlanta, Ga. September 21-23, 2005.

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## Training & Education

### Training Web Site

In the second quarter of 2005, the NCCPHP Training Web Site had 1,115 new registered users and 2,312 new completed trainings. So far this year, NCCPHP has developed 15 new Web-based distance learning modules that allow users to receive free continuing education units. In addition, 8 new resources were added to the catalog of trainings from all providers, and 4 new items were added to materials for trainers

### FOCUS on Field Epidemiology periodical

A new issue of FOCUS was published this quarter:

- Volume 2, Issue 5: Introduction to Forensic Epidemiology

NCCPHP created a print version of *FOCUS Volume I: The Whole First Season* that contains the first six issues of FOCUS originally published from November 2003 through October 2004. *FOCUS Volume I* was mailed to approximately 2,800 public health agencies nationwide, and distributed in person at several public health conferences.

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## NCCPHP in the News

#### Torok M, MacDonald PDM, Maillard JM.

"Surveillance of Foodborne Diseases in NC: A study of testing and reporting practices of laboratories statewide and of clinicians and infection control practitioners in western NC." Epi Notes. (North Carolina Division of Public Health, Epidemiology Section quarterly newsletter). June-August 2005: 1, 9.

## ***E is for Epi* training CD-ROM and facilitator's guide**

This quarter, NCCPHP completed production of *E is for Epi: Epidemiology basics for non-epidemiologists*, which provides an overview to epidemiology through 5 training modules. The *E is for Epi* modules are available for self-study as audio lectures on the NCCPHP Training Web Site with free continuing education credits.

*E is for Epi* is also available as a resource for trainers, with a CD-ROM and facilitator's guide that contains PowerPoint slides with speaker notes, slide handouts, and guided discussion questions for each module. Approximately 3000 copies of the *E is for Epi* CD-ROM and facilitator's guide have been distributed to state partners, North Carolina PHRSTs and local bioterrorism planners, and public health agencies nationwide.

## **Videoconference Training**

NCCPHP staff broadcast the following videoconference trainings this quarter:

- "Writing an Outbreak Investigation Report" on August 9 via North Carolina PHTIN
- "Risk Communication" on July 7 via Virginia PHIN
- "Study Design" on August 4 via Virginia PHIN
- "Designing Questionnaires" on September 1 via Virginia PHIN

## **Online Certificate in Field Epidemiology**

A cohort of 70 students enrolled in the Certificate this fall. NCCPHP is coordinating 5 scholarships for public health epidemiologists in the fall surveillance course.

## ***Introduction to Communicable Disease Surveillance and Investigation* training course**

A total of 29 communicable disease nurses completed the spring 2005 course. To date, 87 nurses from local health departments across North Carolina have completed this training course.

## **Epi Info Software Training**

NCCPHP conducted training sessions on the Epi Info Software program to 43 public health workers in 2 local health departments this quarter.

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## **Lifelong Learning**

Planning is underway for a Lifelong Learning Conference scheduled for April 27, 2006. In addition, we have been working with the senior assistant to the state health director on Health Disparities and Workforce Development and the Vital Records section chief to determine training needs for state public health workers.

NCCPHP staff continued their assistance in lifelong learning and workforce development. This quarter, agency-wide training plans were completed for Alamance, Chatham, Cherokee, Craven, Dare, Harnett, Hertford, Pamlico, and Yadkin counties.

NCCPHP staff presented lifelong learning training sessions to the following groups:

- Alamance County health department staff (N=100)
- Cabarrus Health Alliance Workforce Development Team (N=12)
- Craven County health director and nurse supervisor/bioterrorism coordinator
- Harnett County health department management and emergency management staff (N=5)
- Pamlico County health department staff (n=18)

NCCPHP also added 20 new trainings and a new training provider to the System's training catalog. Staff provided technical assistance to users in Alamance and Northampton counties in North Carolina, as well as the Virginia Department of Health and Butte County, California.

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## Work with Partner States

This quarter, we have worked with 9 states (California, Massachusetts, Kansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia), offering technical expertise and training assistance.

Planning is already underway for the third annual State Public Health Preparedness Partners' Annual Workshop to be held April 26, 2006. In addition to other state partners who received this information last quarter, we sent information to North Carolina state partners, PHRSTs, and local bioterrorism planners about our Lifelong Learning Initiatives, the NCCPHP Training Web Site, *FOCUS on Field Epidemiology* periodical, and Online Certificate in Field Epidemiology, as well as an 11x17" poster to promote the Training Web Site.

We are working with Tennessee and South Carolina to create statewide public health preparedness training plans for each of these states, and is helping West Virginia develop an implementation plan for their statewide training plan at local and regional levels. NCCPHP staff also delivered training sessions on chemical agents to Metro Health Department of Nashville/Davidson County, Tennessee, and presented field epidemiology training for El Paso City-County Health Department, Texas.

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*Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to  
"improve the capacity of the public health workforce  
to prepare for and respond to terrorism and other emerging public health threats."*