

Center Spotlight



At the North Carolina Institute for Public Health

A quarterly newsletter highlighting NCCPHP activities and accomplishments

October-December 2005

In December, it is common to reflect back on the year and review things that have gone well and others that need more nourishment. We have had a busy quarter to close out the year. The highlights include offering the first-ever presentation of the CDC's Public Health Emergency Law Course in West Virginia and assisting with Florida's response to Hurricane Wilma through our Team Epi-Aid program. We are proud of all of our 2005 activities and have made them available through past Spotlights on our [Highlights](#) web page.

Best wishes for the new year,
Pia MacDonald, NCCPHP Director

Surveillance & Epidemiology

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

Team Epi-Aid responded to a request for assistance from the Florida Department of Health through NC Division of Public Health, Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response. Four volunteers traveled to south Florida on October 30-November 3 to assist with Hurricane Wilma rapid needs assessment in Broward and Hendry counties. The UNC School of Public Health featured this trip on their web site for several weeks. In addition, 16 Team Epi-Aid students attended an Epi Info training on November 12.

Technical Assistance to North Carolina

This quarter, NCCPHP assisted Henderson County with creating a monthly communicable disease report and helped Bladen County with Epi Info software problems. NCCPHP is coordinating rapid needs assessment training with Public Health Regional Surveillance Team 5 and is developing a partnership with the Certificate in Disaster Management on a statewide response team.

Publications

Horney J, MacDonald PDM, Rothney E, Alexander L. User Patterns and Satisfaction with Online Trainings Completed on the North Carolina Center for Public Health Preparedness Training Web Site. *J Public Health Manage Practice.* 2005. 11(Supplement 1):S90-94.

Alexander L, et. al. A Pilot Hybrid Internet/Classroom Based Communicable Disease Continuing Education Course for Public Health Nurses in North Carolina: Lessons Learned. *J Public Health Manage Practice.* 2005. 11(Supplement 1):S119-122.

Horney J, Solliceto B, Alexander L. Competency-based Preparedness Training for Public Health Practitioners. *J Public Health Manage Practice.* 2005. 11(Supplement 1): S147-149.

Training & Education

Training Web Site

In the final quarter of 2005, the NCCPHP Training Web Site had 1,545 new registered users and 3,151 new completed trainings. In 2005, NCCPHP developed 29 new Web-based distance learning modules that allow users to receive free continuing education units.

FOCUS on Field Epidemiology periodical

A new issue of FOCUS was published this quarter:

- Volume 2, Issue 6: Forensic Epidemiology Investigations

NEW! Symposium Series for Public Health Preparedness

NCCPHP created a new training opportunity this fall to allow public health professionals and students to meet with experts and discuss today's issues in public health preparedness. The sessions were presented live in the Michael Hooker Research Building at UNC and broadcast to public health departments across North Carolina via videoconference.

The following presentations were offered this quarter:

- "Strategic National Stockpile" with Lt. Alysso Brown, CDC (also available via webcast)
- "Public Health Informatics" with Dr. Herman Tolentino, CDC Public Health Informatics Fellow
- "Federal Public Health Responsibilities for Terrorism Preparedness" with Dr. Dan Sosin, CDC Senior Advisor for Science and Public Health Practice

Videoconference Training

NCCPHP staff broadcast the following videoconference trainings this quarter:

- "Interviewing Techniques" via Virginia Public Health Information Network (PHIN)
- "Data Analysis" via Virginia PHIN
- "Reading and Writing outbreak Investigation Reports" via Virginia PHIN

Online Certificate in Field Epidemiology

A total of 61 students completed "Introduction to Epidemiology" and 62 students are enrolled in the "Field Epidemiology Methods" course for spring 2006. In addition, 11 students from the Public Health Leadership Program are also enrolled in "Field Epidemiology Methods."

Presentations

"Improving Preparedness through Training Supports and Infrastructure."
Presented at American Evaluation Association Conference. October 27, 2005.

"Building training plans for the local public health workforce based on assessed need in preparedness and core public health competencies." APHA, 2005.

"Emergency preparedness and response competencies: Data from North Carolina's first comprehensive assessment of the local public health workforce." APHA, 2005.

"Implementation of an online assessment with public health workers: Strategies for success." APHA, 2005.

"Online training in public health preparedness: Who's using it and what are they learning?" APHA, 2005.

"Development, implementation and evaluation of an Internet-based public health preparedness training site for public health professionals." APHA, 2005.

Introduction to Communicable Disease Surveillance and Investigation training course

A total of 24 communicable disease nurses completed the fall 2005 course. Since fall 2004, 111 nurses from local health departments across North Carolina have completed this training course.

Disaster Training at Fort Bragg

NCCPHP staff developed and presented one-hour training on public health impacts of disasters and rapid needs assessment with the director of the UNC Certificate in Disaster Management. This training was presented to 40 community health staff at Fort Bragg's Womack Army Medical Center.

Lifelong Learning

Public health employees across the state received Save-the-Date cards for the Lifelong Learning Conference scheduled for April 27, 2006. Final preparations for the conference are being made.

NCCPHP staff are working with the senior assistant to the state health director on health disparities and workforce development and the section chief for Vital Records to discuss training needs for state public health workers. NCCPHP is also working with the Division of Public Health regarding the new system for state employee banding and tying competencies to public health job descriptions.

This quarter, NCCPHP staff also worked with the Forsyth County Board of Health and health department employees to address the low participation rate in the 2004 workforce assessment. By December 2005, the participation rate had increased to 74% and new data were being summarized.

NCCPHP staff continued their assistance in lifelong learning and workforce development. This quarter, agency-wide training plans were completed for Catawba, Carteret, New Hanover, Northampton, and Wilkes counties. NCCPHP also worked with all 16 lifelong learning counties to implement the training plans, and presented a lifelong learning training session at Cabarrus Health Alliance.

NCCPHP provided technical assistance to users in Haywood, Onslow, and Robeson counties in North Carolina, and provided additional information about the Public Health Workforce Development System and reporting options to Dartmouth University.

Project Public Health Ready

NCCPHP is assisting 25 northeastern North Carolina Project Public Health Ready counties in meeting project objectives and accomplishing goals by the August 2006 deadline. NCCPHP staff will be working with "workforce competency" including developing an assessment and training plan.

(Presentations Continued)

"Knowledge and practice of foodborne disease clinical specimen testing and reporting in the healthcare community." APHA, 2005.

"Laboratory testing for Escherichia coli O157/STEC in North Carolina." APHA, 2005.

"Diagnosis and reporting practices of foodborne disease among clinical laboratories in North Carolina." APHA, 2005.

"Priority training needs among public health nurses in North Carolina." APHA, 2005.

"Ongoing implementation of a hybrid Internet/classroom-based continuing education communicable disease course for North Carolina public health nurses." APHA, 2005.

"Evaluation of the University of North Carolina's Team Epi-Aid program: Satisfaction of the public health department partners and student participants." APHA, 2005.

"Healthcare practitioners' foodborne disease testing practices in western North Carolina." APHA, 2005.

Work with Partner States

This quarter, NCCPHP worked with 7 states (Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia), offering technical expertise and training assistance.

Planning is ongoing for our Center's third annual State Public Health Preparedness Partners' Annual Workshop to be held April 26, 2006.

We are working with Tennessee and West Virginia to implement statewide public health preparedness training plans developed by NCCPHP for each of these states.

NCCPHP staff delivered the first-ever implementation of the CDC's Public Health Emergency Law training course to 160 attendees in Charleston and Morgantown, WV. Attendees also included observers from the CDC, NIOSH, and McKing Consulting. Similar courses are being planned for Nebraska, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and NCCPHP is offering assistance to other states wanting to implement the course.

NCCPHP in the News

Public Health Emergency Law.

Morning Edition: West Virginia Public Radio. October 18, 2005.

Public Health

Emergency Law. WDTV Channel 5 Evening News. October 19, 2005.

"Beyond Textbooks and TV: **Team Epi-Aid** Learns Through Experience." Featured news on SPH Web site: <http://www.sph.unc.edu/>. November 21, 2005.

"**NCCPHP** puts CDC emergency law training into action." *Impact: a quarterly newsletter*. The North Carolina Institute for Public Health. November 2005.

"Hurricane Katrina-- Public health folks step up." *Impact: a quarterly newsletter*. The North Carolina Institute for Public Health. November 2005.

"**E is for Epi** debuts." *Impact: a quarterly newsletter*. The North Carolina Institute for Public Health. November 2005.

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