

Center Spotlight



a program of the North Carolina Institute for Public Health

A quarterly newsletter highlighting NCCPHP activities and accomplishments

April - June 2008

This quarter we witnessed some exciting progress on several of our public health preparedness mental health projects. Work is almost completed on the newly updated *Behavioral Health All-Hazards Readiness and Response Training Curriculum*, which was an important focus of the Behavioral Health All-Hazards Readiness and Response Training Continuum Conference. The conference was held in Chapel Hill on June 10th with about 70 participants primarily from North Carolina and Tennessee. Through lectures from top National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) officials and local health department disaster responders, the conference centered on the need for training, cooperation, and preparedness for the disasters that bring such devastating mental health consequences.

Also introduced at the conference was the soon-to-be-released radiation mental health curriculum, entitled *Introduction to Mental Health Preparedness for Radiological Disasters*. NCCPHP and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have worked together to create this new DVD training which mixes traditional PowerPoint slides with video interviews from survivors of radiological disasters, and provides a workbook with additional resources. The new training will be available from CDC.

---Pia MacDonald, NCCPHP Director

Surveillance & Epidemiology

Team Epi-Aid (SPH student volunteers assisting with urgent public health response)

In April, Team Epi-Aid volunteers helped with a Community Health Assessment in Onslow County.

Technical Assistance to North Carolina

This quarter, NCCPHP and the NC Division of Public Health (NCDPH) continued to provide training and assistance to local health department professionals on the North Carolina Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NCEDSS). A total of 130 persons from 18 counties (Alexander, Catawba, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Nash, New Hanover, Onslow, Orange, Pender, Robeson, Wake, Wayne, Wilkes and Wilson) were trained to use the system and site assessment visits and on site assistance were provided to additional counties starting to use the system.

Publications

Horney J, Snider C, Gammons L, Ramsey S. Factors associated with hurricane preparedness: Results of a pre-hurricane assessment. *J Natural Dis.* 2008;3(2):143-149.

Alexander LK, Wallace JW, Wilfert RA, Horney J. Development of a training web site for public health preparedness continuing education. *J Interact Instr Dev.* 2008;20(1):28-38.

Alexander LK, Dail K, Davis MV, et al. Partnering to meet training needs: A communicable disease continuing education course for public health nurses. *Public Health Rep.* 2008;123(suppl 2):36-43.

Presentations

Anderson M, Alfano-Sobsey E, Clayton J. Overview of the NC Epi Teams Training Plan. Presented at the 5th Annual North Carolina Communicable Disease Epi Teams Conference; May 19, 2008; Chapel Hill, NC.

NCCPHP and NCDPH have also been working together to review school closure amendments to local health departments' Pandemic Influenza Preparedness plans. This quarter, NCCPHP staff assisted several local health departments with their plans, including Beaufort, Burke, Cherokee, Craven, Franklin, Granville-Vance, Hyde, Jackson, Jones, Pamlico, Pitt, Stanly, and Union Counties, along with the Albemarle Regional Health Services.

The 5th annual North Carolina Communicable Disease Epi Teams Conference was held in Chapel Hill on May 19th. Two hundred sixty-seven participants attended the conference and heard presentations on recent outbreaks in North Carolina, the North Carolina Electronic Disease Surveillance System, and the new Epi-Teams curriculum. The curriculum, which was unveiled at the conference, consists of case study exercises, activities, and resources for Epi Team members. The curriculum can be found at <http://nccphp.sph.unc.edu/epiteams/index.htm>.

Also this quarter, 9 participants from the Governor's Task Force for Healthy Carolinians, as well as other health educators in Waynesville were trained to use Epi-Info software.

Training & Education

Training Web Site

Two new courses were added to the Training Web Site in this quarter; "Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions for Pandemic Influenza" and "Rabies Epidemiology and Control." These two new courses bring the total number of courses on the site to 156. There were 1815 new users in this quarter, bringing the total number of users to 26575. And finally, there were 3,940 new course completions, with 49,077 total course completions from 131 countries.

FOCUS on Field Epidemiology

One new issue of *FOCUS on Field Epidemiology* was published in English, and one issue is newly available in Spanish. [Volume 5, Issue 2: Mapping for Surveillance and Outbreak Investigation](#) is now available, as is [Volume 3, Issue 4: Investigaciones de Salud Ambiental: Desarrollando Evaluaciones de Salud Ambiental \(Conducting Environmental Health Assessments\)](#). Both issues are available on the *FOCUS* Web page <http://nccphp.sph.unc.edu/focus/index.htm>.

In addition, NCCPHP conducted an online survey of Spanish *FOCUS* users. The overall response rate was 20% (43/220). Almost 90% of respondents indicated that had used *FOCUS* to meet their own training needs and many users also indicated that they were able to apply what they learned in *FOCUS* to their work (89%).

Symposium Series on Public Health Preparedness

The 2008 Symposium Series concluded with two lectures this quarter. Dr. Jim Thomas, Director of the Program for Public Health Ethics at UNC-Chapel Hill, and Associate Professor in the Department of Epidemiology gave an online lecture entitled "Ethics in Public Health Emergencies: Beyond the Usual Suspects" in April. Eighty-two people heard the lecture either live, or through the online archive. In May, Dr. Sam Stebbins, Director of the Center for Public

Presentations

(continued)

Gunther-Mohr C, Flage L. Training continuum: Overview of the curriculum and level one awareness training. Behavioral Health All-Hazards Readiness and Response Training Continuum Conference; June 10, 2008; Chapel Hill, NC.

Rosselli, R. Planning for Pandemic Influenza in Correctional Facilities. Spring 2008 Jail Health Update; Atlantic Beach, NC; April 23, 2008

Health Preparedness at the University of Pittsburgh, gave a presentation entitled "Preventing the Spread of Influenza in Public Schools." Over 200 people have accessed his lecture either live, through the online archive.

Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Training Course for North Carolina Local Health Departments

The 5th and final session of the influenza preparedness course for local health department staff began on June 15th with 17 new students. Recent additions to the course include a toolkit on school and childcare planning. The course, taught in partnership with the NC Division of Public Health, will finish in August.

NCCPHP staff attended the "Spring 2008 Jail Health Update" in April to present about pandemic influenza preparedness for jails. Following a lecture detailing the effects of the 1918 influenza pandemic in the San Quentin prison and the basics of pandemic influenza preparedness, NCCPHP staff facilitated small group discussions on jail-specific preparedness challenges.

Introduction to Communicable Disease Surveillance and Investigation Training Course

Another successful session of the *Introduction to Communicable Disease Surveillance and Investigation* Course ended this quarter. Almost all of the 50 enrolled local public health practitioners from 35 counties in NC completed the course requirements. Another session of the course will be held in the fall in partnership with the NC Division of Public Health.

National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Advanced Practice Centers

This quarter, NCCPHP staff continued working with NACCHO to disseminate the resources developed by the Advanced Practice Centers (APC). NCCPHP coordinated webinars with the APCs in March, April, and May, on topics ranging from environmental health and biosurveillance to engaging community partners in preparedness. NCCPHP staff also assisted with two one-day APC regional meetings in Seattle, WA, and Chapel Hill, NC. Finally, NCCPHP has worked with NACCHO to disseminate workbooks and CD-ROMs containing material from the APC conference in February. Eight hundred eighty-six workbooks and CD-ROMs have already been mailed to interested parties, with several thousand still available from NACCHO.

Avian Influenza Online Training Course

In April, NCCPHP staff met with partners at the CDC's Office of Workforce and Career Development (OWCD), Influenza Division (ID) and Coordinating Office of Global Health (COGH) to discuss a new avian influenza project. NCCPHP will work with OWCD and COGH to create a comprehensive course on avian influenza to be used by CDC public health workers globally. The course will cover influenza basics, surveillance, infection control, ethical concerns, lab safety, and both pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical interventions. The course will come in two forms; a CD ROM with PowerPoint files and facilitation notes, which can be easily translated into other languages, and a more interactive course, complete with audio recordings and animation. Support for this project comes from the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists.

Kenan Institute Asia Program on Hospital Preparedness for Pandemic Influenza

In June, NCCPHP staff traveled to Thailand to meet with partners at the Kenan Institute Asia (K.I.Asia). Over the next few months, NCCPHP will be working with K.I.Asia to create a pandemic influenza preparedness program for hospitals. The program will be targeted to hospital planners in Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, and parts of China. NCCPHP staff will return to Thailand in September 2008 to facilitate a 4-day workshop as part of the program.

Work with Partner States

Florida

In June, NCCPHP staff traveled to Tampa to assist the Florida Department of Public Health with a one-day training using our Public Health Emergency Law course. 61 participants attended the training from various agencies, including public health, hospitals, emergency management, law firms and the military. To date, we have fielded more than 3000 order requests for the Public Health Emergency Law CD-ROM.

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