



Preparedness Newsletter

In the US-Affiliated Pacific and Caribbean Islands

Volume 1, Issue: # 1

September 2014

ASTHO News

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New Preparedness Newsletter for US Affiliated Islands

This issue of the Preparedness Newsletter for US Affiliated Pacific and Caribbean Islands is the first of a new series of monthly newsletters from ASTHO. The idea for a newsletter arose from a recent assessment of ways that ASTHO could increase program support to US Affiliated Pacific Island (USAPI) health agencies' preparedness programs. This assessment took place throughout the month of June, when ASTHO staff met with Preparedness Directors from multiple USAPI jurisdictions. Through this monthly newsletter, ASTHO intends to address members' requests for an archived collection of best practices in Preparedness from the US Affiliated Pacific **and** Caribbean Islands, reminders of grant deadlines, announcements of educational and funding opportunities, and a forum for highlighting the work of preparedness programs for health agencies' leadership. ASTHO requests ideas to improve future newsletter issues and welcomes your contributions. Please contact Heather Misner (hmisner@astho.org) to suggest items for upcoming newsletters.

National Preparedness Month - Call for Stories

September was National Preparedness Month (NPM). Under the leadership of FEMA's Ready Campaign, NPM called on Americans to take steps to understand the risks in their communities, to practice what to do in advance of an emergency, and plan how to reconnect with family members after a disaster. This year, FEMA launched a new supplemental campaign called "[America's PrepareAthon!](#)," a nationwide campaign to take preparedness one step further by moving people from awareness to action - with an emphasis on drills, group discussions, and exercises. In support of NPM and "[America's PrepareAthon!](#)," ASTHO reaffirmed its pledge to prepare in September through our NPM [webpage](#) and multiple activities for staff and members.

ASTHO's external activities included the promotion of NPM events occurring across the states, territories, and freely associated states via our webpage dedicated to NPM, the collection of promising practices in public health preparedness, and a special activity on September 10th for members attending the ASTHO Annual meeting in Albuquerque. Internally, ASTHO planned an activity simulating a family emergency communication plan, educational competitions, and distribution of office emergency go-kits to staff.

Please help ASTHO share preparedness events across territories and freely associated states by sending us your National Preparedness Month activities completed in September - whether your agency hosted activities or simply participated in them. You can submit your activities at <http://www.astho.org/Forms/NPM-2014/Events/>. To share promising practices and accomplishments in Preparedness that your state or territory would like ASTHO to publish as stories, please submit your topics via <http://www.astho.org/Forms/Preparedness/Accomplishments/>. ASTHO also invites its members to learn how your state or territory can participate in National Preparedness Month and "America's PrepareAthon!" via a pre-recorded webinar: <http://www.community.fema.gov/connect.ti/AmericasPrepareathon/view?objectId=3222352&ex>

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For questions, please contact Neyling Fajardo (nfajardo@astho.org).

Tenth Annual Directors of Public Health Preparedness Meeting

ASTHO is pleased to share information about the Tenth Annual DPHP Meeting, scheduled to begin at 9 AM EDT on Tuesday, October 7, and end at 12 PM on Thursday, October 9, 2014. We hope that you can join us in Washington, DC in October and continue the tradition of networking, information sharing, and collaboration that has been the hallmark of past DPHP meetings. Please contact Jennifer (Sinibaldi) Lumpkins (jlumpkins@astho.org) or Neyling Fajardo (nfajardo@astho.org) if you have any questions about the meeting.

REGISTRATION:

Registration for this meeting is \$350 (breakfast, breaks, lunch provided). Registration will remain open until Wednesday, October 1, 2014. Onsite registration will not be available. To register for this event, please visit: <https://www.regonline.com/2014dphpmeeting>.

MEETING LOCATION:

The Fairfax at Embassy Row
2100 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008

IMPORTANT:

CDC and ASPR have provided travel memos to assist you in seeking approval for travel to this meeting. These memos are available on the registration website and can be accessed once you begin the registration application.

Promising Practices

Call for Preparedness Stories

ASTHO's "[Have You Shared](#)" initiative systematically collects and disseminates stories that highlight promising and useful practices and implementation strategies developed by state, territorial, and freely associated state health agencies. ASTHO created the Have You Shared campaign to solicit stories of promising practices and is working with our members to capture stories from across all ASTHO content areas. Please tell us about your successes in Preparedness at <http://www.astho.org/Forms/Preparedness/Accomplishments/>. The following story features a practice from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Building a Medical Reserve Corps in the Northern Mariana Islands

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) built a strong network of volunteer medical responders by recognizing resources within the community and establishing strong partnerships. Not only was CNMI able to recruit medical volunteers in a short-staffed setting but its health agency was able to use those volunteers to boost manpower for health promotion.

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is a national network of medical, public health, and other emergency response professionals who volunteer to respond to a variety of emergency events. Although the need for - and

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interest in - MRC networks is high in the US Affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPIs), few MRC programs exist in the region. The critical role of all medical and public health personnel in day-to-day healthcare needs presents a barrier for recruiting volunteers for other duties. Having built a robust and active volunteer base from innovative partnerships, however, CNMI stands as a model for building an MRC network in a medically short-staffed island setting. CNMI also overcame challenges around liability, compensation, and other legal issues to recruit 256 disaster-ready volunteers. With the help of strong partnerships with - and active support from - community organizations, like the Red Cross, local nursing school, and the regional MRC Coordinator at the federal level, CNMI's volunteers stand trained for all hazards, including mass fatality, outbreak, and natural disaster scenarios. Since the launch of the program, real world events led CNMI to deploy its MRC units three times. The manpower that these MRC volunteers also bring to staffing emergency exercises, immunization activities, and health education campaigns during non-emergency times underscore their value to the community. Read the rest of this story at <http://www.astho.org/Preparedness/Building-an-MRC-in-CNMI/>.

For more information, contact: Warren Villagomez at warren.villagomez@dph.gov.mp

Preparedness in the News

Chikungunya Outbreak in American Samoa

American Samoa shared the following situation report of its ongoing outbreak of chikungunya:

As of August 26, 2014, there are 631 probable cases reported with 9 hospitalizations and 0 deaths. Reference lab testing confirmed 37 of 67 patients tested to be positive for chikungunya. Reference lab tests were negative for dengue, Zika and measles (further testing continues). A deceased case suspected for chikungunya is now confirmed by CDC Lab Pathology as a positive Leptospirosis case. Note that Chikungunya is an Aedes mosquito-borne disease. (more info at: www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/)

Case Definition for Probable Cases: Acute illness since June 15, 2014 with at least two of the following: fever, rash, body aches.

Response measures:

Mass text and media messages were released to provide information about the risk of disease and mode of spread; to promote the information hotline; to encourage clinical or ER care for patients with acute fever, rash and/or body aches; and to encourage mosquito control and avoidance of bites. A "Chik Hotline" for management of patients by phone is now in operation, (684-731-7511) and protocols are in place. Alert and situation updates were sent to physicians, nurses, key government agencies in American Samoa via PacNet.

An American Samoa Government mandatory clean-up is now in progress for two weeks in all school divisions. The Governor has been briefed regarding the chikungunya situation. The distribution of bed nets and

[SPC](#)

[ASPR](#)

[Hospital Preparedness Program \(ASPR\)](#)

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Resources

[Live Map of Epidemics and Emerging Disease Alerts in the Pacific \(SPC\)](#)

[Weekly Pacific Syndromic Surveillance Reports \(WHO\)](#)

[Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network](#)

[CDC PHEP 101 Training Video](#)

[CDC PHEP 102 Training Video](#)

[National Resource Center on Advancing Emergency Preparedness for Culturally Diverse Communities](#)

[Building Community Resilience to Disasters \(RAND\)](#)

[Social Distancing Law Project Legal Assessment Template \(ASTHO\)](#)

[Social Distancing Law Project Meeting Template \(ASTHO\)](#)

[NEMA EMAC Resources](#)

[EMAC Tips for Health Agencies \(ASTHO\)](#)

[Citizens Corps Volunteer Liability Guide \(FEMA\)](#)

[The National](#)

mosquito repellents from WHO to families in need continues. AS is working on a multi-agency village vector control plan. Travel advisories are being handed out to airport (incoming & outgoing) and ferry terminal visitors.

AS would like to welcome Scott Anesi, their Epidemiologist now overseeing the Health Information System and Communicable Disease Surveillance. AS thanks CDC, WHO, Hawaii Public Health Lab, SPC, ASCC, LBJ, ASPA, EPA, Samoan Affairs, EPA, Public Works, Agriculture for their support.

For additional questions about this outbreak, please contact Si'itia Soliai-Lemusu at sitia@doh.as.

Partner Updates

Pacific Island Health Officers' Association

EpiNet Training Opportunity

_PIHOA created a one-day EpiNet refresher course for EpiNet outbreak surveillance and response teams that cross hospital and public health lines. The course is designed to be delivered in-country. The course is set up to clarify roles of various team members and walk them through the step-by-step approach to managing disease outbreaks. This "EpiNet Short Course" was pilot tested in American Samoa in late July in the setting of the first-ever Chikungunya outbreak there.

For further information, please contact Mark Durand, durand@pihoa.org.

EpiTech Data for Decision Making Workshop Report Available

_PIHOA and multiple partnering organizations co-sponsored a Data for Decision Making (DDM) level I course in June in Palau. The workshop brought together participants from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Palau, Yap, and Pohnpei. DDM I aimed to: build disease outbreak investigation and surveillance skill competencies of EpiNet team members; link preparedness program officers to their disease outbreak teams; develop standard operating procedures for EpiNet teams in each jurisdiction; contribute to the fulfillment of academic credentials for applied epidemiology; and provide a stepping stone to training in advanced applied epidemiology.

Facilitators included Mark Durand (PIHOA), Thane Hancock (PIHOA), Dawn Fitzgibbons (Palau Ministry of Health), Haley Cash (Palau MOH), Sevil Huseynova (World Health Organization), Janice McMichael (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), and Afeke Kambui (ASTHO). Participants demonstrated an improvement in understanding syndromic surveillance and outbreak investigations over the course of the workshop. Read the workshop report at <http://www.astho.org/Preparedness/PIHOA-EpiTech-DDM1-Workshop-Report/>.

[Infrastructure Protection Plan\(NIPP\)](#)

[Tools for Radiation Readiness \(ASTHO\)](#)

[Public Health Preparedness and Response to Chemical and Radiological Incidents \(RAND\)](#)



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Division of Strategic National Stockpile Announces Its Course Schedule

The Division of Strategic National Stockpile (DSNS) is happy to announce its Strategic National Stockpile Preparedness course and Mass Antibiotic Dispensing Train-the-Trainer (MADT) course schedules for federal fiscal year 2015. Provided in partnership with FEMA's Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) in Anniston, Alabama, interested applicants can apply through CDP's registration system at <https://cdp.dhs.gov/register/registration-process/>. Open season for applications is approximately three months from the start of each course. All travel expenses will be paid for by FEMA for state and local personnel, and the courses are free.

The SNS Preparedness course is a "blended" course using self-paced learning, virtually-led classrooms, and in-person training to provide state and regional planners and MCM staff all the information needed to design and execute MCM mass dispensing. This includes instruction on formulary, warehouse operations, distribution methods, and point of dispensing operations.

SNS Preparedness Course Dates:

- 3 - 5 November 2014
- 18 - 20 February 2015
- 4 - 6 May 2015
- 10 - 12 August 2015

There are no prerequisites for the SNS Preparedness course.

The MADT course can help improve your preparedness training. Working with DSNS's expert trainers, your staff can become certified to offer CDC continuing education credits through a FEMA authorized course. Please pass on this exciting opportunity to those who provide training in your jurisdiction.

MADT Course Dates

- 15 - 17 October
- 27 - 29 May
- 24 - 26 August 2015

Prerequisites for this course are:

- Attendance at either DSNS' SNS Preparedness course, or Mass Antibiotic Dispensing (MAD) course, or Mobile Preparedness course (MPC).
- At least a part-time role as trainer.

Questions? Please contact Barbara Cooper at bic1@cdc.gov or Steve Holland at aoy7@cdc.gov.

Upcoming Grant Deadlines

TODAY, September 30, 2014

Due for PHEP:

- Budget Period (BP) 2 Annual Progress Report
- BP 2 Performance Measures
- BP 3 Technical Assistance plans
- Final Federal Financial Report for BP 2

For questions, please contact Kristin LaBar (ing8@cdc.gov) and Tara Brown (hju0@cdc.gov).

Have something to share?

If your agency or organization would like to contribute to the Preparedness E-Newsletter, please contact us at hmisner@astho.org. Content should be of interest to public health professionals in the US Affiliated Pacific and Caribbean Islands and should concern public health and healthcare system preparedness and related activities.



About ASTHO

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

ASTHO is the national nonprofit organization representing the state and territorial public health agencies of the United States, the U.S. Territories and Freely Associated States, and the District of Columbia. ASTHO's members, the chief health officials of these jurisdictions, are dedicated to formulating and influencing sound public health policy, and to assuring excellence in state-based public health practice.

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