ASTHO Meets with the Puerto Rico Departamento de Salud, Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response Staff

On April 30, Jennifer Lumpkins, ASTHO's director of public health preparedness, met with over 20 staff from the Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response at the Puerto Rico Departamento de Salud. At the meeting, health department staff shared their Hospital Preparedness Program achievements and public health emergency preparedness capabilities, and discussed areas that need future technical assistance. In March 2015, health department staff, in collaboration with the National Guard and Civil Air Patrol, participated in Operation Boriqueneer, a five day full-scale earthquake and tsunami exercise. Participants tested several capabilities during this response and will share highlights on a future DPHP conference call. Capabilities included emergency operations coordination, emergency public information and warning, fatality management, information sharing, medical countermeasures dispensing, medical materiel management and distribution, public health laboratory testing, responder health and safety, volunteer management, responder safety, and health and patient tracking.

Partner Updates

U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) Prepare for 2015 Atlantic Hurricane Season

The Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency launched its Hurricane Ready Campaign in May, encouraging the community to take steps now to prepare for the 2015 Atlantic Hurricane Season. Read more about the USVI campaign in this press release and about other USVI community hurricane preparedness efforts in this news article.

Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Convenes Climate Change Stakeholder Meeting in Guam

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Esther Kia'a'aina visited Guam in early June to convene the U.S. Insular Areas Climate Change Stakeholder Meeting. Nearly 90 officials from the U.S. territories and freely associated states, federal agencies, higher education institutions, and key non-governmental groups, met to discuss efforts to develop and strengthen climate change adaptation, resiliency plans, and strategies for the Insular Areas. Read more about the meeting in this news release and this article.
The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Addresses MERS Preparedness

Officials of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) in CNMI confirm that there are no cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) on the island, however, they remain aggressive in their emergency preparedness tactics following a suspected case in Guam. CHCC is working with the Marianas Visitors Authority, CNMI Homeland Security, the Commonwealth Ports Authority, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection to ensure all emergency plans are in place. Read more about these preparedness efforts in this local news article.

FSM and RMI Schools and Communities Participate in Climate Change Mitigation and Disaster Preparedness

Schools in FSM are exemplifying the importance of community resilience efforts through the Australia-funded International Organization for Migration (IOM)-implemented Climate Adaptation, Disaster Risk Reduction and Education program and IOM has signed an agreement to further fund the same program in RMI. The additional investment will complete three climate adaptation and disaster mitigation projects in the Republic. Read more about the program in action in Chuuk in this regional news article and the RMI funding agreement in this announcement.

The Division of Strategic National Stockpile (DSNS) Announces Course Schedule

DSNS has announced 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 in Anniston, Alabama, interested applicants can apply online, and open season for applications is approximately three months from the start of each course. All travel expenses for state and local personnel will be paid for by FEMA, and the courses are complimentary.

The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Preparedness course is blended and uses self-paced learning, virtually-led classrooms, and in-person training to provide state and regional planners and medical countermeasures (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 Remaining Course Date:

- August 10-12

MADT Remaining Course Date:

- August 24-26

Questions? Please contact Barbara Cooper or Steve Holland.
Upcoming Conferences and Webinars

2015 ASTHO Annual Meeting and Policy Summit

When: Tuesday, September 29 - Thursday, October 1
Where: Salt Lake City, Utah
Description: ASTHO's annual meeting welcomes state and territorial health officials; department heads and other leaders at state and local health agencies; individuals from federal health agencies, academic institutions, and healthcare facilities; private sector health industry executives; and leaders from ASTHO affiliates and other public health organizations into a conversation to address strategic public health and leadership issues.

Upcoming Grant Deadlines

Disaster Health Information and Collaboration Projects 2015

Application deadline: Monday, July 6
Funder: National Library of Medicine
Description: This funding opportunity is for small projects to improve access to disaster medicine and public health information for healthcare professionals, first responders, and others who play a role in health-related disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. Projects must be conducted within the 50 States, territories, and possession of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and the District of Columbia. For more information, visit https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=c681c3181b5fa1c831b46e6e9f465442.

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.

Stories collected by the Have You Shared initiative are shared through the ASTHO website as well as through the State Public Health Weekly, other ASTHO newsletters, communications with affiliate organizations and partners, and ASTHO meetings.

Please tell us about your successes in Preparedness at http://www.astho.org/Forms/Preparedness/Accomplishments/.

Have something to share?

If your agency or organization would like to contribute to the Preparedness Newsletter, please contact us at mcarlin@astho.org. Content should be of interest to public health professionals in the U.S.-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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