

**ABSTRACT**

# Placing surveillance in a preparedness business process framework

PJ Gibson<sup>1</sup>, and F Theodore<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Marion County Health Department, Ocala, FL, USA; and <sup>2</sup>CMA Consulting, Kansas City, MO, USA  
 E-mail: jgibson@hhcorp.org

**Objective**

The Public Health Emergency Preparedness Business Process Interdependencies Framework was developed through a collaboration of state and local health departments, brought together to define public health’s business processes related to preparedness. This session will explain the framework, the role of surveillance within it, and the methodologies used to develop it.

**Introduction**

Most public health workers could reach agreement on the general functions and operations regarding public health’s traditional operations, such as food safety inspections, outbreak investigations, or immunization clinics. However, there is much less shared understanding about public health’s emergency preparedness activities.

A consortium of state and local health departments was brought together to define public health’s business processes related to preparedness. That consortium developed the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Business Process Interdependencies Framework, a concise yet comprehensive description of what public health agencies do to prepare for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies. The framework’s ‘monitor’ group of processes includes *Conduct Syndromic Surveillance*, placing it in context of other emergency preparedness processes.



**Methods**

This session will present the framework, explain the methodologies used to develop it, and describe how syndromic surveillance and other surveillance processes interact with the rest of the framework. The framework’s applicability will be demonstrated through two scenarios—a syphilis outbreak and a health agency’s response to H1N1. We will also compare this framework with four existing emergency response frameworks—the National Response Framework,<sup>1</sup> the National Health Security Strategy,<sup>2</sup> the CDC goals for public health emergency preparedness (PHEP) activities, and the PREPARE for Pandemic Influenza Quality Improvement toolkit<sup>3</sup>—and discuss their relative advantages and uses.

We will show how this framework can accommodate local variations in structure, be used as a quality improvement tool, and aid in communicating public health’s role to its emergency response partners.

**Results**

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe a framework that shows how public health agencies operate in public health emergency preparedness;
2. Understand the relative value of this framework in comparison with other emergency response frameworks; and
3. Describe how the disease surveillance process interacts with the other public health processes used in response to public health emergencies.

**Conclusion**

The framework generalizes well-to-health agencies nationwide, despite local variations in structure. Within the framework, the surveillance processes have an important role in triggering the initial response, as well as in informing continuing response activities. Public health leadership may use the framework to better organize, monitor, prioritize,

and fund public health preparedness activities. It can also be used as a quality improvement tool to understand and enhance preparedness processes for improved outcomes.

### **Acknowledgements**

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### **References**

- 1 National Response Framework. [http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/editorial\\_0566.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/editorial_0566.shtm).
- 2 National Health Security Strategy. US Department of Health & Human Services/Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response; 2009:43.
- 3 Lotstein D, Leuschner KJ, Ricci KA, Ringel JS, Lurie N. PREPARE for Pandemic Influenza: A Quality Improvement Toolkit; RAND Health; 2008:217.