

Office of Emergency Preparedness Southern Tier Briefing

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ELEVATED

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Threat Level

December 17, 2004

The United States Department of Homeland Security recommends that while the Nation is under threat level yellow, Americans should continue to be vigilant, take notice of their surroundings, and report suspicions items or activities to local authorities immediately.

Training/Education

- Ten thousand four hundred thirty five (10,435) personnel representing healthcare delivery agencies in the southern tier of Connecticut have completed EM 101 as part of their emergency preparedness efforts.
- Evaluation of EM 201: Bioterrorism Preparedness for Clinicians, the intervention portion of an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) agreement led by Dr. Louise Dembry, is currently underway and will continue through January 31, 2005. Following completion of the study, the course will be made available to all physicians via OEP's learning management system. Participants who complete the course will be eligible to receive 1.0 CME category 1 credit.
- Requests for EM 101 and other education and training tools have been received via our newly implemented Internet site and online learning center. Interested parties include Puerto Rico Department of Health, North Hawaii Community Hospital, Washington State Department of Health Workforce Development and the North Carolina Center for Public Health Preparedness at UNC at Chapel Hill. Please visit us at <http://yalenewhavenhealth.org/emergency>.

Universal Respiratory Etiquette

- A randomized household survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 11 states to determine Americans' experiences, beliefs and practices regarding influenza prevention found that more than 80% are willing to take measures that might prevent influenza transmission, including wearing a mask while waiting to see a healthcare provider. In light of limited availability of influenza vaccine this season, the CDC indicated that the use of masks by persons with cough illnesses in healthcare settings and other recommended respiratory hygiene strategies might help decrease influenza transmission. All of the delivery network hospitals (Yale-New Haven Hospital, Bridgeport Hospital, and Greenwich Hospital) have implemented the Universal Respiratory Etiquette (URE), not only in the Emergency Department and outpatient areas, but also when dealing with pediatric, HIV, and geriatric populations.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Report 2004

- Results from the second annual study conducted by Trust for America's Health (TFAH) to gauge state preparedness and determine America's overall readiness to respond to bioterrorism attacks and other health emergencies revealed that over two-thirds of states and the District of Columbia achieved a score of six or less on a ten-point scale examining key emergency preparedness indicators. Connecticut scored six out of the ten possible indicators. TFAH reported, "The scores demonstrate continued incremental progress, however, preparedness is still lagging behind goals and expectations....Overall, the report found that many basic bioterrorism detection, diagnosis, and response capabilities are still not in place." The report and state-specific information is available at www.healthyamericans.org.

Legislative Program Review Findings and Recommendations

- On December 14, 2004, the findings and recommendations of the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee related to Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies were presented and approved. The overall conclusion of the report is that while significant progress has been made by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health and its partners over the last three years, a number of components need to be further developed. The full text of the report is available at http://search.cga.state.ct.us/dtSearch_lpa.html.

DPH Weekly Conference Calls

- The State of Connecticut Department of Public Health continues to conduct weekly conference calls every Friday at 1:00 p.m. until further notice to discuss the current influenza season with acute care hospitals and local health partners. The telephone number to call is (860) 857-7419 and the passcode to join the conference call is 78406; this information will remain consistent. For further information, please contact Mary Duley, Hospital Preparedness Coordinator, State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, Office of Public Health Preparedness, at (860) 509-7152. The DPH Influenza Updates hotline is available at (800) 830-9426.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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**DPH 2004-2005 Laboratory Confirmed
Influenza Testing Weekly Report
December 14, 2004**

- The December 14, 2004 Weekly Report attached to this briefing includes a summary of reports of laboratory confirmed influenza tests received from all Connecticut laboratories to date, a summary of all influenza testing reported to date, and an attachment examining hospitalized pneumonia cases as an indirect measure of influenza activity. Questions or comments regarding the summary data can be directed to Alan J. Siniscalchi, MPH, MS at alan.siniscalchi@po.state.ct.us.

Stockpile Recommendations

- Physician representatives of the YNHHS System Clinical Advisory Committee are developing recommendations for pharmaceuticals as part of acute care hospital stockpiles for response to biological, chemical, trauma/burn and radiological emergencies. Included will be recommendations as to medication formulation and quantity to have on hand. These recommendations will be available for review and comment by December 27 and will be distributed electronically to all representatives of the Southern Connecticut Bioterrorism Planning Committee. Hospitals will be encouraged to use the final approved stockpile recommendations to coordinate stockpile approaches within their Public Health Emergency Planning Regions.

TOPOFF3 Update

- The State of Connecticut Department of Public Health has requested that all southern tier hospitals complete the TOPOFF 3 Hospital Information Sheet attached to this briefing. Please provide complete contact information for Hospital Controllers and Hospital Evaluators/Data Collectors as this information will be added to a master database for the full-scale exercise. Also, ensure that your hospital's emergency operations center has some type of high speed DSL and /or satellite downlink capability to receive simulated news feeds from the TOPOFF 3 Virtual News Network (VNN). Questions or concerns on TOPOFF 3 can be directed to Mukesh Roy at Mukesh.roy@ynhh.org or (203) 688-2563.
- To train and prepare communications staff for TOPOFF 3 in April 2005, the Connecticut TOPOFF3 Planning team held a local PIO/PAO conference on December 16, 2004 from 7:30 am to 4:15 pm at the Mystic Hilton. Officials representing the U.S. Coast Guard National Response Team, DHS, and the FBI participated. The seminar enabled Connecticut Public Information Officers (PIOs) to increase their awareness on the policies, procedures, and structures in place to manage information and effectively communicate in the event of a major public health incident in the State of Connecticut. For more information, please contact Linda Bergonzi King at Linda.bergonzi-king@ynhh.org, or (203) 688-2567.

Questions, comments or suggestions should be forwarded by FAX to (203) 688-4618 or by e-mail to: OEPWEB@ynhh.org

ONGOING TRAINING & EDUCATION

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) FOR CERT TEAM TRAINERS DONNA LEE CAMPBELL (860) 566-1188	1/5-7/05	8:00 AM	NEW CANAAN FIRE DEPARTMENT
GRAND ROUND SERIES: ASSESSING CHEMICAL EXPOSURE: A DIFFERENT APPROACH HTTP://WWW.PHPPO.CDC.GOV/PHTN/FLYER/JAN05UofA-SPH-CPHP.PDF	1/6/05	9:00 AM EST	CDC SATELLITE BROADCAST
COMPUTER-AIDED MANAGEMENT OF EMERGENCY OPERATIONS (CAMEO)-OPERATIONS LEVEL (PER-224) DONNA LEE CAMPBELL (860) 566-1188	1/25-27/05	8:00 AM	NORWALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE
EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC BIOLOGICAL INCIDENTS- OPERATIONS LEVEL (PER-220) DONNA LEE CAMPBELL (860) 566-1188	2/22-23/05	8:00 AM	DHS/BRAINARD FIELD

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
STATE BT ADVISORY COMMITTEE	12/20/04	1:00 PM	CHA
GREENWICH EMERG MGMT COMMITTEE	12/21/04	2:00 PM	GH
SEPC	12/22/04	8:30 AM	BH EDUC CONF RM

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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