

Office of Emergency Preparedness Southern Tier Briefing

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ELEVATED

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Threat Level

March 4, 2005

U. S. Homeland Security Plans Not to Raise Threat Level

- The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been aggressively monitoring and assessing information with other Federal agencies on potential terrorist threats in the United States. Based on a recent interagency review of available information leading up to the September 11th anniversary, DHS remains concerned about Al-Qaeda's continued efforts to plan multiple attacks against the U.S. and U.S. interests overseas. However, at this time, DHS has no specific information on individual targets or dates for any attack. Arrests over the past several months of key Al-Qaeda members around the world may have delayed or even disrupted some plans. It is known, however, that operatives still at-large view attacks on U. S. territory as a priority and that they continue to pursue a range of targets, tactics and capabilities to accomplish this objective. Al-Qaeda's primary intent is to conduct synchronized attacks against U. S. interests. At the same time, recent terrorist incidents overseas highlight the possibility that Al-Qaeda could opt to conduct lower-scale attacks against "softer" target sets. The Department of Homeland Security will continue to work with Federal partners in monitoring and assessing all intelligence reporting relative to Al-Qaeda operations. More information is available from the DHS website at:
http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/press_release/press_release_0238.xml.

Biodosimetry Functional Drill

- March 4, 2005, marks the completion of the first statewide biodosimetry functional drill in which 19 of 20 clinical laboratories trained in preparing samples for biodosimetric analysis have participated. Within the next week, the Biodosimetry Laboratory staff will provide feedback to each participating laboratory regarding overall state, as well as individual laboratory drill performance. Completed evaluation forms detailing difficulties encountered by clinical technologists during the drill and any suggested exercise and procedural improvements should be emailed to Virginia Kristie at Virginia.kristie@ynhh.org by Friday, March 11, 2005. For further information regarding the drill or other biodosimetric issues, please contact Dr. Joe Albanese at (203) 688-3316 or joseph.albanese@ynhh.org.

Pandemic Influenza Update

- The United States Department of Health and Human Services has developed annexes specifically related to pandemic influenza. Annex 2: Planning Guidance for Health Care System is available for download at:
<http://www.dhhs.gov/nvpo/pandemicplan/annex2.pdf> . In addition, Annex H: Resource Management Guidelines for Health Care Facilities During an Influenza Pandemic from the Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan can be viewed at:
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi/pdf-cpip-03/cpip-appendix-h.pdf>.

Vaccination Coverage Among Callers to a State Influenza Hotline: Connecticut, 2004-05 Influenza Season

- In response to the influenza vaccine shortage in the United States, the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) operated a telephone hotline from October 22, 2004-January 15, 2005. The purpose of the hotline was to address questions from the public regarding the availability of influenza vaccine, reduce the number of telephone inquiries to physicians and local health departments (LHDs), and advise callers regarding which groups were most at risk and in need of influenza vaccination. Caller information was collected and shared daily with LHDs, which were encouraged to follow up with callers as their resources allowed. A report summarizing results of a retrospective survey of callers to the DPH influenza vaccine hotline during November 2004 is can be viewed at:
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5408a3.htm>. The results indicated that vaccination coverage varied by age group and that persons receiving follow-up calls from LHDs were more likely to receive vaccination. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests that state health departments might consider a hotline as a method for educating the public regarding influenza vaccination and a follow-up system as a means to improve vaccination coverage, especially among those at greatest risk.

Emergency Credentialing Program

- On February 18, 2005, approximately 97,000 Emergency Credentialing Program recruitment brochures were mailed to licensed healthcare professionals in Connecticut. To date, two hundred ninety-eight (298) reply cards have been returned. For more information about the program or to arrange a presentation to management staff, please contact Carol Luddy at carol.luddy@ynhh.org or (203) 688-5544.

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TOPOFF3 Update

- The Virtual News Network (VNN), the official news network of the National Exercise program and the TOPOFF exercise series, consists of two key elements: VNN LIVE and VNN.COM. VNN Live will be on air on Wednesday, March 30, 2005 from 11:00 a. m. -6 p.m. VNN Live will broadcast via KU and C band satellite downlink to all participants. Information regarding registration for VNN Live and VNN.COM is attached to this briefing. Please ensure your hospital has the downlink capability to view the live program during TOPOFF3. VNN will also be conducting signal tests on the following dates:
 - March 28, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. & from 1:00 p.m. – 2 p.m.
 - March 29, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. & from 1:00 p.m. – 2 p.m.
 - April 3, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. & from 1:00 p. m. – 2 p. m.

Please contact Mukesh Roy at (203) 688-2563 or Mukesh.roy@ynhh.org with questions.

- A mandatory 1-day training program for TOPOFF3 **controllers** and **evaluators** will be held at the Coast Guard Academy during the week of March 28 – April 1, 2005. Registration forms will be sent by TOPOFF3 planners directly to the individuals previously identified by the southern tier hospitals. Hospital funding for TOPOFF3 participation may be used to reimburse costs associated with attendance at this training. Please notify Mukesh Roy at (203) 688-2563 or Mukesh.roy@ynhh.org if your controllers and evaluators have not yet received registration materials.
- On April 4, 2005, the 32 acute care hospitals in Connecticut will participate in TOPOFF3. Although level of participation may vary from hospital to hospital, each will need to report bed availability as they currently do on a daily basis using the BT website (www.biotprep.com). Additional information will be gathered by telephone on other hospital capacities including clean water and electricity, pharmacy and medical supplies, blood supplies, staffing (sufficient for incident), security (sufficient for incident), and equipment (i.e. monitors, ventilators, IV pumps, etc.). Responses should be based upon current capacities as well as the numbers of patients (real or paper) hospitals are receiving. Southern tier hospitals are asked to develop an information-gathering process and to identify a point of contact so that this information can be readily shared with YNHHS CoE and the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health.



Training/Education

- Twelve thousand eight hundred sixty-seven (12,867) personnel representing other healthcare delivery agencies in the southern tier of Connecticut have completed EM 101 or EM 102 as part of their emergency preparedness efforts.
- Incident Command Systems for the Healthcare Industry, an introductory level course, will be available through the YNHHS online learning management system in early April. Please contact Scott Selig at (203) 688-2587 or scott.selig@ynhh.org for more information.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers self-paced on-line courses on the National Response Plan (NRP), National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS). The preferred method to register for the FEMA on-line courses is through CT TRAIN. CT Train is a learning management system set up by the State of Connecticut Department of Health (DPH). First Responders, First Providers, Local Health Directors, Emergency Management Directors, Chief Elected Officials and their staffs are encouraged to take all of the FEMA-sponsored NRP, NIMS and ICS on-line courses offered through the CT TRAIN system. The courses presently offered are NRP Awareness (IS-800), NIMS Awareness IS-700), ICS Awareness (IS-100) and ICS intermediate (IS-200). Individuals can access these courses by going to <http://ct.train.org>. Please contact Kristin Sullivan at Kristin.sullivan@po.state.ct.us or at (860) 509-7126 for more information.

CURRENT DISASTER & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT LITERATURE

TSAI M C, ARNOLD J L, CHUANG C C, CHI C H, LIU C C, YANG Y J. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HOSPITAL EMERGENCY INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM DURING AN OUTBREAK OF SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS) AT A HOSPITAL IN TAIWAN, ROC. THE JOURNAL OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE 2005; 28(2); 185-196.

JACOBY I. SARS AND THE HOSPITALEMERGENCY INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (HEICS): OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT AS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION. THE JOURNAL OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE 2005; 28(2); 225-226.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
SOUTHERN CT HOSP BT PLANNING COMMITTEE	3/10/05	8:30 AM	CHA
SCAC	3/11/05	2:30 PM	OEP

ONGOING TRAINING & EDUCATION

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
WMD THREAT & RISK ASSESSMENT (MGT-310) DONNA LEE CAMPBELL (860) 566-1188	3/8-10/05	8:00 AM DAILY	DHS, BRAINARD FIELD
“LIVE RESPONSE” A WMD INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION PROGRAM: THE NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM HTTP://WWW.PHPPO.CDC.GOV/PHTN/CALENDAR.ASP	3/23/05	2:00 PM ET	CDC BROADCAST
RECOGNITION OF CHEMICAL ASSOCIATED GASTROINTESTINAL FOODBORNE ILLNESS HTTP://WWW.PHPPO.CDC.GOV/PHTN/GASTRO-05/DEFAULT.ASP	3/30/05	12:00 PM ET	CDC WEBCAST
CAMEO TRAIN-THE-TRAINER TRAINING (MGT 320-1) DONNA LEE CAMPBELL (860) 566-1133	4/12-14/05	8:30 AM	EAST HARTFORD PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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