

Field Epidemiology Training Programs

UPDATES

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This electronic quarterly newsletter is produced by CDC's Division of Public Health Systems and Workforce Development. It aims to inform the international Field Epidemiology Training Programs community about news and events of interest.

We welcome your input. Please send your comments and suggestions to pkrumm@cdc.gov.

For more information about us go to www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/fetp and www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/smdp.

SEEKING SUBMISSIONS

If you would like to submit an article, please contact Pascale Krumm at pkrumm@cdc.gov.



Welcome to the First Issue of our Newsletter

I am pleased to present the first issue of our electronic quarterly newsletter produced by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Public Health Systems and Workforce Development.

The newsletter provides information and updates to the international Field Epidemiology and Training Programs (FETPs) community as well as our global public health partners on such issues as outbreak investigations, epidemiology resources, career advancement and training opportunities, and more.

I hope you will find the information useful and encourage you to share your comments and suggestions with us.

Bassam Jarrar, MBA, MA
Acting Director
Division of Public Health Systems and Workforce Development
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

FETP In Action

Pakistan's FELTP public health response to the 2010 floods

When flood waters rose in Pakistan in late July 2010, one of the first calls for help went to the CDC-supported Pakistan Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (FELTP). The Pakistan Ministry of Health created a post-disaster infectious disease taskforce and contacted Dr. Rana Jawad Asghar, an EIS alumnus and CDC's advisor to the FELTP, asking the program to be part of the taskforce. The taskforce drafted an overview of anticipated public health challenges and outlined requisite response measures.



A local health official briefs Jawad Asghar, MD (in white cap) and FELTP team members about current disease surveillance in a medical camp in the Sindh Province.

In addition, 31 MDs (Fellows and alums) and other health experts from the FELTP, including 11 newly-trained epidemiologists who had just completed the 2-year program, were sent to help their provincial departments of health to handle the response and control efforts in this humanitarian crisis. These Public Health Officers health experts were sent into the refugee camps, where they monitored health conditions and watched out for disease outbreaks such as cholera which can spread rapidly in crowded, precarious, and unsanitary conditions.

The Government of Pakistan is also using another 70 people who had taken an FELTP training course in Surveillance and Outbreak Detection and Response in previous years. Together, these public health workers helped provide vital public health services, including planning, coordination, data collection, analysis, and interpretation for emergency preparedness and response.

According to Pakistan's Director General of Health, Dr Rashid Jooma, "The involvement of the Pakistan FELTP fellows is of paramount significance to our national public health response." Dr. Asghar remarked that, "The FELTP fellows' unconditional commitment to serve in this public health disaster is a direct result of the intensive field-based trainings which are the hallmark of the FELTP tradition."

Contributions provided by Jawad Ashgar ✖

Graduate Corner

Jonas Brant, Brazil FETP graduate, 2000

Jonas Brant, DVM, started his career in Botucatu, a small city in São Paulo state, Brazil, working in zoonosis control.

In 2006, to further his training, he enrolled in the Brazilian FETP (called EPISUS) focusing on leptospirosis surveillance and outbreak.



Jonas Brant, DVM, REDSUR consultant, provides an overview of the network to the new FETP cohort in Brazil, June 2010

After graduating from the program, he worked for the Brazilian Ministry of Health where he was put in charge of rodent-related diseases (leptospirosis, hantavirusis, and rickettsiosis).

In 2009, Dr. Brant was awarded a CDC/TEPHINET

fellowship. His task was to learn more about the multiple aspects of FETPs in order to make suggestions for program improvements, as well as to acquire skills in mentoring, management, advocacy, and leadership.

Dr. Brant did a rotation in three different offices: he spent 2 months at CDC headquarters in Atlanta, 5 months at the Central America FETP in Guatemala, and 5 months at the South Caucasus FELTP in the Republic of Georgia. After completing the fellowship in early 2010, Dr. Brant was tasked with a new challenge: helping set up REDSUR, a regional field epidemiology network modeled after the

African Field Epidemiology Network, a network that provides support and networking options to FETPs in Sub-Saharan Africa. The goal of REDSUR is to provide technical assistance to cross-border applied epidemiology activities and national programs in South America.

The network will help unify the FETPs and provide a platform for sharing information and resources. In particular, REDSUR will coordinate with programs to develop training resources (such as case studies) and devise a common training program for tutors and a standard to evaluate the training.

REDSUR will be based in a country in South America (to be determined) and should become operational by early 2011.

Contributions provided by Jonas Brant ✖

Management Training

2010 Management for International Public Health (MIPH) Course Held in Gaborone, Botswana

A country's important health initiatives can fall short of their goals when public health leadership and management skills are lacking and when effective organizational health systems are not in place. To assist countries in building stronger foundations in leadership and management, CDC offers an annual Management for International Public Health (MIPH) course. After the course, MIPH graduates implement system strengthening activities in their countries, with technical assistance and support provided by staff from CDC's Sustainable Management Development Program (SMDP).

The 2010 MIPH course, which was held August 18–September 1, 2010, in Gaborone, Botswana, was conducted outside the United States for the first time to make attending easier and more affordable for participants. Thirty-three participants representing country teams from Botswana, India, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Vietnam, Zambia, and Zimbabwe completed the course.

MIPH course topics included Team Building, Effective Training, Presentation Skills, Project Management, Coaching and Mentoring, Conflict Management, Process Improvement, and Leadership. At the course, participants also honed their training skills with a teachback exercise that included feedback from fellow participants and course facilitators. Now that the participants have returned home, they are implementing systems strengthening plans they developed at the MIPH course.

Holding the course in Botswana also provided an opportunity to showcase the Botswana management capacity building

What some attendees had to say about the course...

"I have been in the public health field almost 5 years now and I think this course is critical to achieving improvements in the workplace."

"MIPH is one of the most transformative courses I have ever attended."

"Teaching the knowledge and skills gained will actually build capacity. There will be more improvement in the delivery of health services within the country as more and more health workers become skilled."

program, which was the recipient of the CDC SMDP Management Capacity Building Program Excellence Award in 2008. The 2010 MIPH participants learned how Botswana country program graduates from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Local Government have put their new management knowledge and skills to work to improve public health. For example, a team of Botswana course graduates at the Gynecology Ward of the Princess Marina Hospital, the country's leading teaching and tertiary care hospital, explained a Process Improvement (PI) project they had conducted. Using PI tools, the team conducted a careful management assessment, then implemented changes in clinic procedures that increased HIV/AIDS screening among women seeking abortions from 37% (1227/3297) in the baseline period to 70% (1366/1949) at follow-up.

As a follow-up to the course, the 2010 graduates plan to implement various management improvements. One team plans to improve the quality of patient care in a hospital by using the PI method. Another team plans to share its new knowledge and skills with healthcare workers at provincial, district, and health facility levels through in-service training programs designed to strengthen their management capacity.

The next MIPH course is tentatively scheduled for June 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand. To receive more information about MIPH 2011 when it becomes available, please e-mail Theresa Lawrence at tsp1@cdc.gov. ✕

Web-based Resources

Public health online community of practice

The international community of FETPs and alumni of CDC's Management for International Public Health (MIPH) course share a tremendous expertise and collection of training materials and resources related to public health.

To promote international collaboration and make these resources available to all programs, CDC and TEPHINET are developing an online community of practice. This web-based system will include a searchable database of resources, offer continuing education, networking among programs, and broadcast announcements.

Additional features of the community of practice will include

- An archive of relevant case studies, articles, and other content organized to encourage knowledge-sharing and collaboration among FETP and MIPH teams,
- An easy-to-use evaluation process to collect feedback from community members for the improvement of materials,
- A collaboration mechanism that allows FETP and MIPH teams to interact and work together to share knowledge resources, and
- Continuing Education webinars and workbooks sponsored by CDC's Sustainable Management Development Program.

A demonstration of this new resource will take place at the TEPHINET Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, December 11–17, 2010.

Workshop and Training

Epidemiology and public health surveillance at mass gatherings

Mass gatherings are a frequent occurrence throughout the world; whether for religious, cultural, political, trade, or sporting purposes, such gatherings can regularly bring millions of people closely together for periods ranging from a few hours to weeks. This type of situation creates unique opportunities for infectious disease transmission, injuries, exacerbation of chronic illness, the constant threat of terrorism, and other important public health considerations. The sheer number and density of people, the activity and, at times, the chaos of the event itself can pose serious challenges to any public health infrastructure.

Ministries of Health (MOHs) and other allied institutions need to carefully plan and prepare for these events so that they are able to protect the health of attendees, prevent or minimize predictable or avoidable health problems, and respond rapidly and effectively to emergency needs as indicated.

While mass gatherings occur all over the world, the Eastern Mediterranean region is host to some of the largest, highest profile annual mass gathering events in the world. The Hajj is probably the best known, bringing up to 3 million pilgrims from around the world to Mecca each year. The region also hosts other very large annual religious events, such as major Shi'ah gatherings in Iraq and Iran that can also attract millions of people over a very short period of time, as well as many major sporting and cultural events.

In August 2010, the Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network (EMPHNET), the U.S. Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE), and CDC co-hosted a workshop in Amman, Jordan, on Public Health Surveillance for Mass Gatherings. Participants included both FETP directors and



Dr. Mohammad Al-Nsour, Executive Director of EMPHNET, addresses the first workshop on Epidemiology and Public Health Surveillance for Mass Gatherings

residents and focal points for public health preparedness within MOHs. Participating countries included Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen. The workshop led to development of projects aimed at establishing or enhancing public health surveillance and response activities in upcoming mass gatherings in each country attending the workshop.

A follow-up workshop is planned for early 2011 in Morocco to review the results and experiences obtained from these projects and work towards development of guidelines and recommendations for public health surveillance for mass gatherings specific to the Eastern Mediterranean region. Together, these workshops and projects are intended to improve public health surveillance and response during mass gatherings across the region. ✦

Conferences

Upcoming conferences

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| 59th Annual American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene Meeting | Atlanta, Georgia, November 3–7, 2010 www.astmh.org/Home.htm |
| 9th Annual International Society for Disease Surveillance Conference | Park City, Utah, December 1–2, 2010 www.syndromic.org/annual-conference/2010 |
| 16th Annual Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Conference | San Antonio, Texas, December 13–17, 2010 www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/mchebi/2010/AboutConference.htm |
| 6th TEPHINET Global Scientific Conference | Cape Town, South Africa, December 13–17, 2010 www.tephinet.org/conferences |
| Society for Veterinary Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine Annual Meeting | Leipzig, Germany, March 23–25, 2011 www.svepm.org.uk/conferences.php |
| 1st Conference on Spatial Statistics | Enschede, The Netherlands, March 23–25, 2011 www.spatialstatisticsconference.com/ |
| 60th Annual Epidemic Intelligence Service Conference | Atlanta, Georgia, April 11–15, 2011 www.cdc.gov/eis/conference.html |
| 3d North American Congress of Epidemiology | Montreal, Canada, June 21–24, 2011 www.epicongress2011.org/ . |
| Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology | Baltimore, Maryland, June 26–29, 2011 www.apic.org//AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home1 |
| GIS in Public Health Conference | Atlanta, Georgia, June 27–30, 2011 www.urisa.org/conferences/health |
| World Congress of Epidemiology | Edinburgh, Scotland, August 7–11, 2011 www.epidemiology2011.com/ |
| 23d Conference of the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology | Barcelona, Spain, September 13–16, 2011 www.iseepi.org/conferences/future.html |
| 60th Annual American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene Meeting. | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, December 4–8, 2011 |
| ISHEID: International Symposium on HIV and Emerging Infectious Diseases | Marseille, France, May 23–25, 2012 www.isheid.com/ |

Conference alerts

To get automatic notifications about upcoming global conferences in public health, prevention, epidemiology, and related field, register at the *Conference Alerts* website at www.conferencealerts.com/publichealth.htm.

Events in America lists epidemiology conferences and conventions at www.eventsinamerica.com/trade-shows/professional-healthcare/epidemiology/

SEEKING SUBMISSIONS AND NEW NAME IDEAS

If you would like to submit an article, please contact Pascale Krumm at pkrumm@cdc.gov. We are also looking for a permanent name for the newsletter. If you would like to suggest a name, please send your contribution to Pascale Krumm as well.

