NSSP UPDATE

Welcome to *NSSP Update*

NSSP Update provides monthly news updates about the National Syndromic Surveillance Program (NSSP). NSSP embodies collaboration, particularly in the development of its BioSense Platform, a secure cloud-based computing environment in which practitioners can share tools to rapidly collect, evaluate, store, and share data. *NSSP Update* will keep you in touch with the latest advancement in the platform's development.

Milestone Met!

On March 11, 2016, the NSSP met its goal to receive syndromic surveillance messages, process messages into the new BioSense Platform archive, and push data to an enhanced ESSENCE application. Software developers at Johns Hopkins University continue to update ESSENCE functionality to ensure that BioSense Platform data are processed and displayed appropriately.

Transition to ESSENCE Begins July 18, 2016

NSSP will begin transitioning sites to the new ESSENCE application on July 18, 2016, with completion anticipated late November 2016. ESSENCE, developed by Johns Hopkins University (JHU), is currently used by many practitioners in the syndromic surveillance community.

CDC has been working with numerous partners to test tools and technologies to support the NSSP. In 2015, for example, members of the community pilot tested ESSENCE, suggested improvements, and provided positive feedback. CDC and JHU are now using this feedback to adapt the well-received application to NSSP's BioSense Platform.

During the transition, six groups (9 sites each) will be brought onboard the BioSense Platform. Each group will transition on a different date and have 4 weeks to complete transition activities (see schedule below). During those 4 weeks, CDC will help each site make sure data are correct and provide an orientation to the new BioSense Platform tools and resources. Here are the activities planned for each week of the transition:

- **Week 1**: CDC will present an overview of the transition plan and conduct an orientation to Adminer, a tool that enables users to view their MS SQL data. Users can access Adminer to view the new BioSense Platform Archive, which stores syndromic surveillance message data in raw and processed tables, and to view and confirm the facility information available in the Master Facility Table.
- **Weeks 2–3**: CDC will conduct an orientation to the Access & Management Center (AMC) and ESSENCE. Users can access the AMC to set up user accounts and data access. Once accounts are created, users can familiarize themselves with ESSENCE and use it to visualize their syndromic surveillance data.
- **Week 4**: Sites will transition to the new data flow in a production environment. CDC will begin converting legacy data from the BioSense 2.0 front-end application to the BioSense Platform Archive and into ESSENCE.

When the transition to ESSENCE is complete, the BioSense Platform will contain site data that represents portions of about 47 states and the District of Columbia.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 16–18, 2016	**2016 NSSP Grantee Meeting**, Atlanta, Georgia
May 18–19, 2016	**BioSense Governance Group Meeting**, Atlanta, Georgia
May 31, 2016	**Call for Papers Deadline**, *Public Health Reports*
	Syndromic Surveillance: The Value of Real-time Data for Public Health Action
	(anticipated publication date for supplemental issue is mid-2017). Guest editors seek manuscripts that advance knowledge about the uses and value of syndromic surveillance for situational awareness and enhanced response to a broad array of diseases, conditions, and events that impact population health.
June 1, 2016	**Webinar:** Orientation to Access & Management Center (AMC) and ESSENCE *(Phase 2 participants only)*
June 1–15, 2016	**User Acceptance Testing** of AMC and ESSENCE *(Phase 2 participants only)*

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UPDATES

- On 5/5/2016, CDC hosted its third webinar in a three-part series about BioSense Platform Data Flow. The webinar, titled Legacy Data Conversion and Data Transition Plan, explained how data from the legacy system will be converted and loaded to the BioSense Platform. View the webinar slides.

- On 4/12/2016, CDC hosted part one of a webinar on User Acceptance Testing (UAT) for the Phase 2 participants. The purpose of UAT is to make sure tools work as intended for routine and specialized tasks and to identify whether improvements are needed.

- On 3/24/2016, CDC hosted its second webinar in a three-part series on data flow. The first webinar (view slides), Data Ingestion into the BioSense Platform, focused on how data are captured. The second webinar, Data Ingestion into ESSENCE, presented technical details about the new flow of data, including info about the new Archive Database, and described how data will be extracted from the Archive Database and input to ESSENCE. View the webinar slides.

PHASE III SCHEDULE AND UPDATE: TRANSITION TO ESSENCE

The development of the BioSense Platform has been a collaboration from start to finish. Now, the finish is in sight. Our Phase 3 Transition Schedule below provides you with our expected time frame for transitioning sites to ESSENCE and the activities involved, such as sites using the new tools and applications, verifying accuracy of data permissions and access, and providing feedback for future development.

Every 4 weeks, nine sites will transition. We'll conduct two webinars with each set of sites. The first webinar will be an orientation to the transition plan and Adminer (a SQL tool for viewing MS SQL data in the BioSense Platform Archive). The second webinar will introduce the Access & Management Center and ESSENCE.

We value your time and participation, and our goal is to stay on schedule. Schedule dependencies include confirmation of site Master Facility Tables, completion of CDC's internal system security checks, and site readiness. If your site anticipates a schedule conflict, please contact http://support.syndromicsurveillance.org. As always, we'll keep you informed on progress.

A *BioSense Platform Quick Start Guide* will be available to help you use the platform tools. During the transition, the NSSP Team will schedule conference calls to answer questions and share information.

Phase 3 Transition Schedule (updated 5/4/2016)	Week 29 18-Jul—22-Jul	30 25-Jul—29-Jul	31 1-Aug—5-Aug	32 8-Aug—12-Aug	33 15-Aug—19-Aug	34 22-Aug—26-Aug	35 29-Aug—2-Sep	36 5-Sep—9-Sep	37 12-Sep—16-Sep	38 19-Sep—23-Sep	39 26-Sep—30-Sep	40 3-Oct—7-Oct	41 10-Oct—14-Oct	42 17-Oct—21-Oct	43 24-Oct—28-Oct	44 31-Oct—4-Nov	45 7-Nov—11-Nov	46 14-Nov—18-Nov	47 21-Nov—25-Nov	48 28-Nov—2-Dec	49 5-Dec—9-Dec	50 12-Dec—16-Dec	51 19-Dec—23-Dec	52 26-Dec—30-Dec
Illinois (includes Cook) / Massachusetts / Kentucky / Arizona / Mississippi / Arkansas / West Virginia / Kansas / Houston, TX	▓	▓	▓	▓																				
Nevada / Utah / New Mexico / Denver Public Health / Riverside, CA / Idaho / North Dakota / Montana / Alaska				▓	▓	▓	▓																	
Stanislaus, CA / Linn County, IA / Santa Clara, CA / Nevada, CA / Florida / Ohio / Pennsylvania / New York / North Carolina							▓	▓	▓	▓														
Georgia / New York City / New Jersey / Indiana / Tarrant County TX / Missouri / Louisiana / Maryland / Washington										▓	▓	▓	▓											
Oklahoma / Minnesota / Connecticut / South Carolina / Oregon / Maine / Nebraska / New Hampshire / Rhode Island													▓	▓	▓	▓								
Boston Public Health Commission / County of Sacramento, CA / District of Columbia / Delaware / San Diego, CA / Hawaii / Vermont / South Dakota / San Mateo, CA																▓	▓	▓	▓					

Weekly Transition Activities (updated 4/29/2016)

Week 1	Weeks 2 and 3	Week 4
▪ CDC presents transition plan and conducts orientation to Adminer ▪ Users access Adminer to view new BioSense Platform Archive ▪ Users confirm accuracy of Master Facility Table	▪ CDC leads orientation to the Access & Management Center (AMC) and ESSENCE ▪ Users set up accounts and data access via AMC ▪ Users learn ESSENCE functionality and use it to visualize syndromic surveillance data	▪ Sites transition to production (new) data flow ▪ CDC begins converting legacy data from BioSense 2.0 front-end application to BioSense Platform Archive and into ESSENCE

MASTER FACILITY TABLE UPDATES

CDC takes steps to make sure facility information is accurate and consistently stored in a Master Facility Table, or MFT. The MFT captures metadata about facilities that will enhance a user's ability to categorize and compare surveillance data on the basis of facility properties—for example, by *patient class*. The MFT is essential for managing data access.
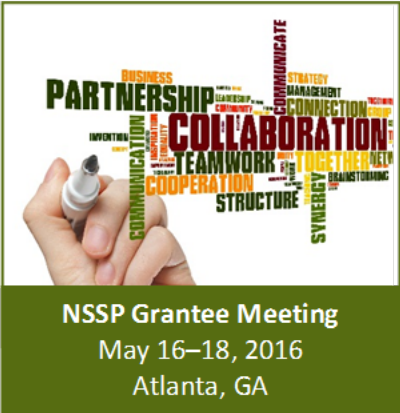
This table shows CDC's progress toward standardizing data in the MFT across facilities that input data to NSSP's BioSense Platform. To check a site's progress, match the accompanying icon to the flow chart.

Schedule for Reviewing Master Facility Table (updated 4/12/2016)

June 2016		July 2016		August 2016	
Alabama	☑	Illinois ☑	Nevada 💬	Stanislaus, CA	▣
Tri County, CO	☑	Massachusetts ☑	Utah 👥	Linn County, IA	▣
Marion, IN	☑	Kentucky 💬	New Mexico 💬	Santa Clara, CA	▣
Michigan	☑	Arizona 💬	Denver PH ☑	Nevada, CA	▣
Tennessee	☑	Mississippi ☑	Riverside, CA 💬	Florida	▣
Virginia	☑	Arkansas 💬	Idaho 👥	Ohio	▣
Washington	☑	West Virginia 💬	North Dakota 💬	Pennsylvania	▣
Wisconsin	☑	Kansas ☑	Montana 💬	New York	▣
Department of Defense	☑	Houston, TX 💬	Alaska 💬	North Carolina	▣
Veterans Affairs	☑				

September 2016		October 2016	November 2016
Georgia	▣	Oklahoma	Boston PH Commission
New York City	▣	Minnesota	County of Sacramento, CA
New Jersey	▣	Connecticut	District of Columbia
Indiana	▣	South Carolina	Delaware
Tarrant County, TX	▣	Oregon	San Diego, CA
Missouri	▣	Maine	Hawaii
Louisiana	▣	Nebraska	Vermont
Maryland	▣	New Hampshire	South Dakota
		Rhode Island	San Mateo, CA

GRANTEE AND PARTNERSHIP UPDATES

The National Syndromic Surveillance Program (NSSP) will host its first **Grantee Meeting** in Atlanta, Georgia, May 16–18, 2016. The meeting will focus on building partnerships. Grantees from 31 state and local health departments will be able to network through sharing and learning. The meeting will include a demo and discussions on ESSENCE, a tool hosted on the BioSense Platform that will improve grantees' ability to share and contribute to local, regional, and national health pictures. Presenters will discuss data sharing and how to strengthen collaboration among practitioners both in public health and in the healthcare system. This is an excellent opportunity for state partners to meet one-on-one with the NSSP project officers and team and to learn more about the NSSP Cooperative Agreement and evaluation process.

NSSP Grantee Meeting
May 16–18, 2016
Atlanta, GA

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE UPDATES

Funding announcement CDC-RFA-OE16-1601, National Syndromic Surveillance Program Community of Practice, closed March 7, 2016. A review board convened April 14, with an anticipated award date of May 31, 2016.

eSHARE EVENTS

- CSTE Annual Conference: **6/19-23/16**
  http://www.cdseconference.org/2016/

- PHI Conference: **8/21-24/16**
  http://phiconference.org/