



Public Health Preparedness Challenges for State Policy

Madison, Wisconsin
January 10, 2008

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Goals for discussion

- National perspective on preparedness through a health lens
- Defining health preparedness
- Research needs
- State policy challenges



Are we more or less prepared?

- The clearest answer is “it depends”



Department of Homeland Security

- Provides strong central focus
- Has returned (in part) to general preparedness
- Cultural gaps in approaching wider community



Department of Health and Human Services

- Asst. Sec'y for Preparedness & Response
- CDC remains partially isolated
- Funding plummeting
- Providing leadership for a sector that is very diverse & independent



States and localities

- A lot more ‘shiny stuff’
- Gradually strengthening
- Not yet fully thinking of health resources in the same frame of reference as fire fighting resources



How do we define prepared?

- the capability of the public health and health care systems, communities, and individuals, to
 - prevent,
 - protect against,
 - quickly respond to, and
 - recover

from health emergencies, particularly those whose scale, timing, or unpredictability threatens to overwhelm routine capabilities.

- Preparedness involves a coordinated and continuous process of planning and implementation that relies on measuring performance and taking corrective action.

Nelson C, Lurie N, Wasserman J, Zakowski S. 2007 Conceptualizing and Defining Public Health Emergency Preparedness. [American Journal of Public Health](#). 97(S1)S9, 3 pgs



Challenges with this definition

- Not everyone sees ‘public health’ as the broader term
- Health is an issue in every emergency, not just ‘health’ or ‘public health’ emergencies



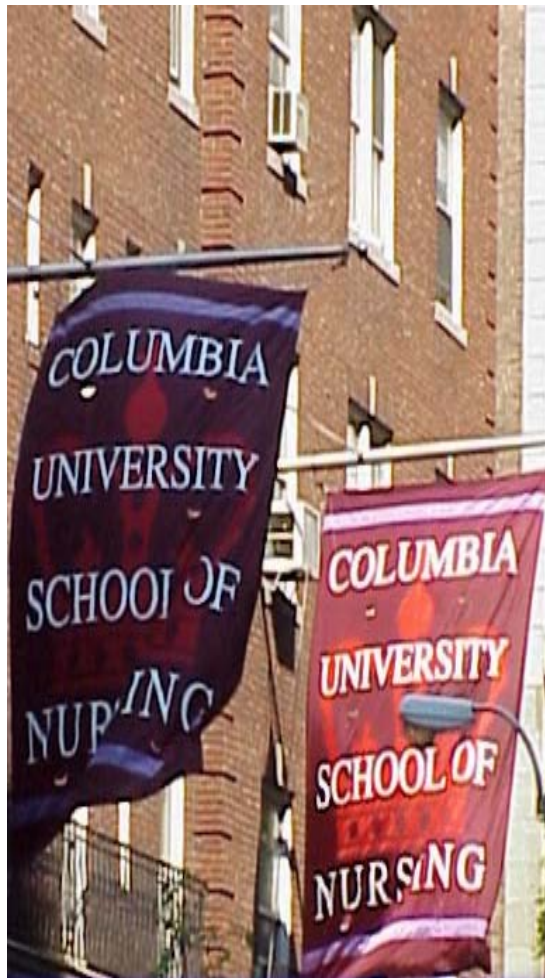
What don't we know?

- Full implication of the legal issues
 - How will overlapping authorities best be resolved?
 - What is the best sequence of escalating control measures?
- How effective is the training we have done?
 - What is the appropriate level of training for every health worker?
 - What is the frequency of training and practice needed to retain proficiency?
 - What methods can be used effectively for what content?
- How to improve public response to a full range of emergencies?



State policy challenges

- Modernizing law
 - Clarity on hierarchy of authority
 - Worker safety and compensation
 - Volunteer liability
- Workforce
 - Licensing laws in time of emergency
 - Minimum training requirement in curricula
 - Continuing education requirements
- Adequate budget for
 - Training and education
 - Drills and exercises



Thank you!

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