

Planning Guidance for a Health System Response to a Bio-event in the National Capital Region

Purpose

The planning guidance for a Health System Response to a Bio-event in the National Capital Region aims to optimize the use of existing authorities and resources in and surrounding the Washington, D.C. area. Through coordination of medical actions by local, state, and Federal governmental agencies, as well as private medical providers, this guidance facilitates cooperative management of the health consequences associated with a bio-event. The Plan encompasses operational, technical, and policy issues related to the health system response, with the goal of strengthening health care response systems throughout the Metropolitan Washington Region.

Objectives

The purpose of this regional plan is five-fold. It functions to:

- Improve early coordination in the region in response to a bio-event;
- Provide prevention strategies including mass immunization and prophylaxis;
- Provide mass care;
- Provide for the respectful and safe disposition of the dead; and
- Provide for environmental safety.

Organization

The planning guidance includes an Introduction, Response Outline, Annexes, Planning Considerations, References, and Local Plans, including those that were referenced in the composition of this Plan.

Response Outline

The recommended response to a bio-event in the National Capital Region outlines six steps pertinent to cooperative management of the related health consequences, including:

- Detection;
- Assessment;
- Determination of the course of action;
- Response to the emergency;
- Conducting public notifications; and
- Ending the event.

Annexes

There are 17 annexes included in this plan that are organized around the recommendations, and address the specific function necessary to consider during a bio-event.

- A. Passive Surveillance;
- B. Detection;
- C. Active Surveillance and Investigation;
- D. Diagnosis;
- E. Medical Prophylaxis;
- F. Medical Response Expansion Program (MREP);
- G. Resourcing EMS Capabilities;
- H. Hospital Plan;
- I. Federal Assets;
- J. Incident Management System;
- K. Policy Makers;
- L. Bioterrorism Task Force;
- M. Communications and Public Information;
- N. Mass Fatality Management Implementation;
- O. Medical Examiner Expansion Program (MEEP) Operations;
- P. Environmental Surety; and
- Q. Pandemic Influenza.

Planning Considerations

The planning considerations define steps for individual jurisdictions to consider when further developing their own response plans. The section is divided into the following six subsections:

- A. Incident Management/Logistics;
- B. Medical and Public Health Surveillance;
- C. Mass Immunization and Prophylaxis;
- D. Mass Patient Care;
- E. Mass Fatality Management; and
- F. Environmental Surety and Recovery Phase.