

ADMINISTRATION, KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF

**Moderator: Sara Belfry
September 22, 2015
10:00 a.m. CT**

Operator: This is Conference #42401572.

Operator: Good afternoon, my name is (Christy) and I will be your conference operator today. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the Statewide Population Health Call. All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. After the speakers' remarks, there will be a question-and-answer session. If you would like to ask a question during this time, simply press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question, press the pound key. Thank you.

I would now turn the call over Ms. Sara Belfry.

Sara Belfry: Good morning, everyone and welcome to the September Statewide Population Health Call. We're going to go ahead and get started right away here. And (Charlie Hunt), our state epidemiologist is going to give us an update on the Ebola preparedness and response plan. And I think he maybe has some other updates.

(Charlie Hunt): I do. Thank you very much and good morning, everyone. First, it was nice to see many of you at the Kansas Health Care Association conference last week. It was great to connect and it was a great conference.

So, on to Ebola. First thing just a very brief situation update, we've surpassed the 28,000 case mark in West Africa. Since the last time I provided a report on one of these calls, more than 11,000 deaths have occurred. There were five cases of Ebola last week that were reported, all of which were in Sierra Leone. Guinea had its first free week of Ebola in over 12 months so that was good

news. All but one of the cases in Guinea were among contacts to previously known cases. There was one case that was not associated and that's something, again, to keep in mind that there still are occasional cases that are popping up that don't have known contacts to a previously reported Ebola case. So, although the numbers are way down, getting to zero will take considerable additional effort.

So we will continue to monitor what's going on. I think one of the most significant items of note for us is that effective yesterday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised us that they will no longer be sending us traveler information for persons who are going through Liberia. This is following a CDC determination that the risk of Ebola importation into the United States by travelers from Liberia is low and that Liberia has implemented effective control measures.

So, once again, travelers from Liberia will no longer be funneled through one of the five U.S. airports as has been the case over the last several months. And CDC will no longer be sending Epi-X notices to us for persons that are coming in. So, therefore, we obviously won't be able to notify the local health departments. And the travelers will no longer undergo active monitoring when they come in or be under any kind of public health monitoring. And CDC has lowered the travel advisory to a Level One travel advisory which is just to practice usual precautions.

So that is reflected in a new version of our preparedness and response plan. This will be version eight. We are very close to getting this version published and there are a couple of other changes that I would like to let you all know about.

One of the first things that I'll mention is that the new plan will include some information about our designated centers of excellence for infectious disease preparedness, otherwise known as the Ebola assessment hospitals. Many of you are probably aware that several months ago the CDC developed a tiered approach for hospital preparedness and this includes three different tiers, the Ebola treatment centers, Ebola assessment hospitals and finally frontline hospitals. CDC has recommended that every state have at least one

designated Ebola assessment hospital and this is also a condition of funding for one of our Ebola preparedness cooperative agreements with the hospital preparedness program.

And after careful discussion here at the state and with hospital partners, we thought Kansas will be best served by having two designated assessment hospitals and so we've made the decision to designate one hospital in the Kansas City metropolitan area which is the University of Kansas Hospital and the other designated hospital will be the Via Christi St. Francis Hospital down in Wichita.

And so, there is updated information in the plan about those two hospitals. And there will be some implications where persons who are under public health monitoring who come back and the health departments are engaging that those individuals about their symptoms.

Generally speaking if the traveler is designated to be at low risk and has mild symptoms that does not include vomiting, diarrhea or bleeding, we will encourage that person to go to the local hospital of their choice. If they are at one of the higher risk categories so that there's some risk or higher or if they're experiencing vomiting, diarrhea or bleeding, then they'll be encouraged to seek care at one of the two designated hospitals in Kansas City or Wichita. So, again, this information is included in the plan.

I've also added information on exposure risk assessment for healthcare workers making it clear that the patient's symptom of vomiting, diarrhea or obvious bleeding will be considered if there's exposure to those patients.

And another significant update to the plan is that we are adopting the CDC guidelines on personal protective equipment. The most notable difference between our version of the plan prior to this and what CDC had recommended is that we had essentially required the use of a (PAPR), a powered air purifying respirator where CDC indicated that either a N95 or a PAPR would be acceptable. And that assessment has implications for us in terms of healthcare workers because we had stated in the plan that if healthcare workers utilized less than our tier one level of PPE then they would be subject

to restricted movement following (their care of the) patient. And so, once again, we're adopting the CDC guidance on that and so that is reflected in the plan.

And then finally, the CDC has updated its guidelines regarding exposure risk categories for the determination of healthcare and public health actions to be taken particularly for laboratory workers. Laboratory workers that are over working in West Africa that are coming back and all they're doing is laboratory work so handling specimens, you know, using appropriate PPE than they are designated to be general speaking at low risk, if the laboratory has been inspected by the CDC and has been determined to have effective control measures in place.

So what will happen is when laboratory workers come back, the CDC staff that are at the airports will contact the CDC Emergency Operations Center and check to see if the laboratories that that person worked in is on the list. And if it was, then they'll be deemed at low risk. If that laboratory was not on the list, then they'll be deemed a potentially higher risk category but those will be handled on a case by case basis. And we'll be working with CDC and local health departments on that when those workers do come back.

OK. Next thing I want to talk a little bit about MERS-CoV. This issue hasn't been in the media a lot lately but it's still around. Saudi Arabia experienced another surge in cases in late August and early September. The North Korean outbreak was essentially over by that point. This is the week of the Hajj pilgrimage and so additional travel to Saudi Arabia is expected this week. There's still a level two travel advisory in place for Saudi Arabia. And, again, I just urge you to look back at the guidance that we put out for MERS in previous KS-HAN messages.

And, you know, once again, I think it's important for healthcare providers to do a careful travel history for all patients that are experiencing any signs or symptoms of potential infectious disease, not just for Ebola and not just for MERS-CoV but there are lots of other diseases that are prevalent throughout the world. If you saw the information that we've been putting out on our #ThinkTravelHistory campaign, we have downloadable posters and we've

sent posters to each hospital so I would urge you to take a look at our website for that.

Next, just a reminder, influenza season is just about here. We do have 35 outpatient sites that are enrolled in our (ILINET), our outpatient surveillance program. And so we'll be gearing up for our full surveillance for the coming flu season so we'll be looking for that.

I'd like to take a moment just to commend the staff at Reno County Health Department. They've continued to work on a (pertussis) outbreak. There have been more than 70 cases there. We're currently reviewing additional cases so that count will likely go up. But, you know, those of you who have had (pertussis) outbreaks in the community know how challenging they can be. And Reno County continues to work on preventing additional spread.

We are getting ready to kind of wrap up (West Nile) virus season here. Now that it's getting to be late September, we've had a relatively quiet year in terms of (West Nile) virus, although, we have had 11 cases and unfortunately we've had two deaths. Until that first hard freeze, we'll continue to see mosquitoes and the risk of (West Nile) virus and other mosquito-borne diseases will be present, however, but we'll continue to put our updated case information on our web pages.

And also back by popular demand, we are getting ready to publish a new version of our communicable disease handbook for schools. I anticipate that will be out within the next couple of weeks. This is something that we had put together actually quite a few years ago and we had made the decision not to keep that book updated because there are so many resources available on CDC's website. But we've had a lot of requests for that book over the last few years and so we decided to update it and put a new one together so we'll be publishing that very soon and so hopefully that will be a good resource for you.

The staff have also put together an updated rash book. This includes information and pictures about vaccine preventive diseases and other diseases that cause rash. And I understand that they'll be printing that and have them

available at the upcoming Kansas immunization conference and we'll be distributing them there.

And then finally, I just wanted to give you a little bit of a heads up about some plans that we have for monthly surveillance indicator reports. As you know we've been publishing state level quality improvement or performance improvement indicators in our Epi Updates newsletter. We've been working for quite sometime on developing the format for reports that we can actually send to each of the counties and make them county specific. And so, we're very close to having those reports done.

The components will include indicators such as the number of cases for the month, the percent of cases that were interviewed, percent that were lost to follow-up, and the percent that were not interviewed. They will have indicators for EpiTrax data field completeness.

And then we'll also have the performance measures for disease control measures initiated and the percent of cases that were closed during that timeframe. And it will include comparisons with peer counties and at the state. Our plan is to e-mail these reports on a monthly basis to the local health department administrators, health officers and medical advisers. And, again, I expect that we'll have those out within the next couple of weeks so be looking for that. And we hope they'll be of use to you.

And with that, I'll turn thing back over to (Sarah).

Sara Belfry: Great. Thank you, Charlie. Next we're going to go to Michael McNulty who has some updates about activities that he has been doing for Preparedness Month.

Michael McNulty: Yes. Thanks, Sara. As we know, September is Preparedness Month and the preparedness program gets really excited about Preparedness Month so we've been out and about. Fred the Preparedness Dog has been out quite a bit. Last week we had a busy week with Preparedness Day at the state fair, we did a radio interview and just got back from Walnut River Festival in El Dorado. There were about 1,000 people last week that interviewed or met with Fred.

So, coming up this Saturday, we're going to be at Cornstock in Garnett. They're going to have a public safety event so if you're in the area, come by. We're also going to be doing some work out at Hill City at an elementary school. We're going to be heading up to Tribune later in the month. Beginning next month, we're going to get some flu information out in Manhattan and then going out to share it in counties. So, if you'd like to have Fred come to your event or school, anything in your area, drop us a note at fredpreparedness@kdheks.gov.

In addition, this afternoon, Fred is going to be doing a Twitter chat with some friends of his, the Safety Friends Unite on Twitter for National Preparedness Month. We're going to be chatting with some of our friends like Smoky the Bear, Owlie the National Weather Service mascot, Sparky the Fire Dog, and Ready Wrigley and some others are going to be doing that. That starts at 2 o'clock Central Time here in the plains where we're going to be Twitter chatting with all those folks for about an hour, maybe an hour and a half.

The hashtag for that will be #safetychat. So if you're on Twitter, look for that, follow Fred, he's at @FredPrepDog and we're hoping to share lots of good information.

September is also a good time to dust off your COOP plan so if you haven't done that, a Continuity of Operations event can happen at any time. So here's a good time in that National Preparedness Month to kind of give that plan a review and make sure that your contact lists are correct, make sure that your essential functions are all written down. KDHE will be participating in the annual state level COOP exercise coming up the first part of October so we're rapidly going through ours making sure that lower case Js are dotted. So, we're putting our money where our mouth is for that.

And finally, before I turn it to Jamie, we're also working on the state preparedness report with the Kansas Highway Patrol which is a requirement for the Department of Homeland Security funding opportunity that they get. Our focuses are going to be fatality management, public health and medical services, health and social services, and environmental response health and safety. So if you have any information, accomplishments, challenges related

to those that you'd like to share with us that we can include in part of that. Please let me know and send that to mmcnulty@kdheks.gov.

And I think Jamie has one thing.

Jamie Hemler: Yes. Just something quick, I was going through the budget period 4 performance measure guidance last week and confirmed that there are no performance measures that local health departments will have to report on for budget period 4 so that update will be made in the local work plans as well as the guidance document. And then that information will be sent out for this Friday's biweekly preparedness update. So, no PHEP specific performance measures this year.

Sara Belfry: Great. Thank you so much, guys. Next, we're going to go to Deb Nickels who is going to talk a little bit about population health and some training events coming up that will be available to you.

Deb Nickels: Good morning, everyone. Cristi Cain has asked me to remind the local health departments that the deadline for the request for proposal for the cross-jurisdictional shared services for public health is October the 16th. Please contact Sarah Hartsig at the Kansas Health Institute for more information. Her e-mail address is shartsig@khi.org.

Concerning (timing of) events that are coming up, all of these will be listed in the October 1 issue of Public Health Connection. And I have a long enough list today. I will also give this out by e-mail to those who are on our population health call distribution list.

The Local Public Health Leadership Series – applications are being accepted by the Wichita State University Center for Community Support and Research. The series begins in January. Contact: Sonja.armbruster@wichita.edu.

The 4th Quarter Regional Public Health Meetings will begin Oct. 1. You can register via KS-TRAIN, Course ID# 1059355 or contact Teri Caudle at tcaudle@kdheks.gov.

Conferences that are coming up are The Kansas Environmental Health Association fall conference is Sept. 30-Oct. 2 in Topeka, Course ID #1056505 on KS-TRAIN

The Kansas Immunization Conference is in Wichita, October 6th through 8th. And that registration information is on the immunization webpage on the KDHE website.

And the Kansas Built Environment and Outdoor Summit is October 13 through 15 in Overland Park. And that webpage site is www.kansasbeos.org.

There is a course that I have a couple of seats available that is the Incorporating Instructional Design and Adult Learning into Training; Improving Your Performance. The course number is 1031962. **This two day class will be October 20 and 30, Curtis State Office Building, Rm 530, Topeka.**

Kansas Public Health and Community Partner educators/trainers are cordially invited to participate in a two day free live event education opportunity. Instructional Design is the practice of creating, "instructional experiences which make the acquisition of knowledge and skill more efficient, effective and appealing." The goal of the training is to provide instructional information and tools for educators/trainers who create/develop effective learning events and support the maintenance of a trained and competent public health and healthcare workforce.

Normally, this 30-seat class is full but I had a couple of withdrawals this past week. So when you see this information, feel free to ask me questions, you can e-mail me or call me at 785-291-3457.

The regional Healthcare Coalition meetings are being posted to TRAIN for registration and tracking of information for preparedness grant reporting requirements.

1. SEKS Healthcare Coalition Meeting, Course ID 1059500
2. NEKS Healthcare Coalition Meeting, Course ID 1059234
3. SWKS Hospital Emergency Response Team HPP Healthcare Coalition, Course ID 1059224
4. NWKS Healthcare Coalition Meeting, Course ID 1059020
5. NCKS Healthcare Coalition Meeting, Course ID 1059634

6. Kansas Metro Regional Healthcare Coalition Meeting, Course ID 1059303
7. The SCKS Healthcare Coalition Meeting has not been posted yet.

New online courses available include:

[IT Security Awareness Training, Course ID1059437](#) presents information necessary for IT system managers, administrators, and users to demonstrate awareness of system security requirements and discuss user's responsibility to protect IT systems and data.

[KDHE: Bloodborne Pathogen \(BBP\) Exposure Control Training, Course ID1058509](#) was created for Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) field staff, but is available for viewing by the public health and safety workforce who may be at risk for exposure. Included in this course is the KDHE Exposure Control Plan. We recommend that you review your organization's exposure control plan after completing this course".

Again all of the training information provided on this call will be available in the Oct. 1 issue of Public Health Connections. You can find the current and past issues of Public Health Connections by using the search field on the right hand side of the KDHE homepage at www.kdheks.gov. If you are not currently receiving an email notice for the newsletter and would like to be added to the distribution list just send a request to bchs@kdheks.gov. You can also find training opportunities through the [KS-TRAIN](#) calendar or use the search field on the right hand side of the learning management system homepage.

Again, all of the information I provided on this call will be available in the October 1 issue of Public Health Connection. If you have questions, please e-mail KS-TRAIN@kdheks.gov. Thank you.

(Sarah Belfry): All right. Thank you, (Deb). Next, we're going to go to hear some news from our Bureau of Health Promotion from (Ginger Park).

(Ginger Park): Thanks, (Sarah). So what I have fits right in line with Deb's comments, so just a couple more items. The first one is the evidence-based public health course. Registration is open for the course which will be held November 17th and 18th in Topeka. The topic, techniques and tools provided were enhanced understanding of the principles of health assessments, improvement planning and evaluation. To register, complete the application form at kdheks.gov/bhp. The application is the top item under the links on the right side of the page.

And then the other item I wanted to mention is the Partnering for Health Conference which will be held Tuesday, October 27th at the Kauffman Foundation Conference Center in Kansas City, Missouri. This is a free event that will highlight partnerships and encourage open discussion among the faith-based community, academic health centers, local health departments, community health workers, and community-based service organizations. So to register for this event, please contact (Todd Moore) at Tmoore3@kumc.edu. Or you can call (Todd) at 913-588-4925. Thank you.

(Sarah Belfry): Thank you, (Ginger). Next is our communications update and I just wanted to let you all know we've been having some issues with people receiving e-mails for this call specifically. If you have been having difficulty receiving e-mails from us just recently, we've had IT reconfigure our e-mail system in recent months. And for some reason, some of our e-mails are getting caught in spam folders so make sure you're checking your spam folders for any user information from us. And then also if you would add us into your address book so that doesn't continue occurring, we would really appreciate that and that makes sure that all of our information gets to you in a timely manner.

I also wanted to mention that we have been sending out just a quick short update about what was discussed on the call with any e-mail addresses, phone numbers or pertinent big information usually within a day or so after the call. And that's in addition to the transcripts that go on our website. The transcripts are usually up within two weeks after the call, although, we do try to get those up as quickly as we can.

Next, I just want to mention that October 6 is Walk to School Day. I know many local health departments are participating in this in their local communities. And so, please feel free to share those on social media and we'll try to share those pictures and events with all of our social media followers.

Also, we're going to be getting into flu season which starts in October as (Charlie) mentioned. We're planning on sending out a press release and doing some social media throughout October about flu vaccination in particular. So,

watch out on our social media for those pieces of information and feel free to share or re-tweet those to your followers as well.

And then just – well, actually the immunization conference is occurring October 6th through the 8th down in Wichita. And there is more information on the immunization section of KDHE's website.

And very lastly, I wanted to introduce (Cassie Sparks). She is our new public information officer for public health and started just last week. So, we're excited to have her onboard and you'll be hearing from her on these calls in the future and she'll be helping us out and hearing, I'm sure, more from everyone at the local health departments.

Just a reminder, our next meeting is October 27th at 10:00 a.m. And, again, the transcripts from previous calls are on the website and along with the codes for the next conference call. So be sure to check out that portion of the website if you have any questions about the next meeting.

And I think we'll go to questions and answers now.

Operator: At this time, if you would like to ask a question, press star then the number one.

At this time, you do have a question from the line of (Lesley Campbell).

(Lesley Campbell): Well, could you repeat the new staff name and position.

(Sarah Belfry): Yes. (Cassie Sparks) is our new public information officer for public health here at KDHE.

(Lesley Campbell): Thank you.

(Sarah Belfry): Yes.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Cheryl Pearce).

(Cheryl Pearce): I was a little confused on the PPE required for Ebola that we're required to get for Ebola on that grant. Are you saying we're not required now to get PPERS?

(Charlie Hunt): That is correct.

(Cheryl Pearce): OK, thank you.

Operator: Once again, if you would like to ask a question from the phone line, please press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. Again, that's star then the number one.

OK, there are no further questions from the phone lines at this time.

(Sarah Belfry): All right. Well, thank you again so much for joining us on this September Statewide Population Health Call. Again, our next population health call will be October 27th at 10:00 a.m. And we will (see) you then. Have a good month.

Operator: Thank you for participating in today's call. You may now disconnect.

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