

AHC-SCPHP Working Group Report

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The Association of Academic Health Centers

- The AHC is a national, voluntary association that represents 105 academic health centers.
- Each academic health center consists of a school of medicine, at least one other health professions school or program (e.g., allied health, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, or public health), and at least one owned or affiliated teaching hospital.
 - Schools of medicine and public health in particular have been actively engaged in public health preparedness with HRSA and CDC.

The AHC's Recent Preparedness Efforts

January 2003 Member Survey

- 94 responses (89.5% response rate).
 - Virtually all academic health centers are involved in preparedness for biological (n=89), chemical (n=84), natural disasters (n=80) or nuclear threats (n=56).
 - Activities encompass education/training (n=86); local/ regional planning (n=81); health services (n=70); research (n=63).
- 43 academic health centers have a preparedness center or institute; a 44th is in development.

January 2003 Member Survey

Academic health centers are working with an array of local, state and regional partners, including:

- state health department (n=79)
- local hospitals (n=65)
- county health department (n=63)
- city health department (n=48)
- governor's office (n=41)
- mayor's office (n=41)
- other academic health centers (n=39)

January 2003 Member Survey

- 57 academic health center CEOs (or a member of their senior management team) serve on a statewide advisory committee to assist the governor in emergency and public health preparedness.
- CEOs identified their top preparedness research priorities as: biodefense/bioterrorism/infectious disease epidemiology (n=27); vaccine development (n=13); biosurveillance and control of infectious disease (n=12); information technology and assurance (n=5); and education (n=3).

Proposed Network of Academic Health Centers for Biodefense

- The AHC proposed to establish a network of academic health centers or consortia to work with local partners to enhance preparedness
- The proposal had three phases:
 - 6-month planning phase;
 - Phase II (12- to 18-month demonstration phase): approximately 20 institutions to catalog and coordinate with other initiatives, develop new and enhance existing protocols, and develop a plan for national replication;
 - Phase III: national rollout with broader participation.

Proposed Network of Academic Health Centers for Biodefense

- Proposal was developed by AHC in fall 2002.
- SCPHP/AHC Working Group endorsed the AHC's proposal in December 2002.
- Presented this proposal to the SCPHP in January 2003.

Biodefense Preparedness Video News Release

- Produced in March, 2003 with private funding.
- Taped interviews with AHC president and members of AHC Biodefense Council.
- Satellite feed available nationwide in August, 2003.
- Media able to contact local academic health center CEOs for stories with local angle.

Proposed Online Repository for Biopreparedness

- Project ORB has been submitted to HRSA's Bioterrorism Training and Curriculum Development Program, for which the AHC seeks \$1.5M per year for each of 2 years.
- Under Project ORB, academic health centers would create a centralized online repository of content for continuing education across the health professions.
 - The repository materials would be adaptable for use by different health professions, easily updated and expanded, and freely available to all.

Online Repository for Biopreparedness

- Project ORB would build on the AHC's experience with Partnerships for Training
- PFT is a \$14M Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded initiative that addresses health workforce shortages in underserved areas with a 'grow-your-own' approach.
- PFT trains certified nurse-midwives, nurse practitioners, and physician relying heavily on distance learning methodologies.

Online Repository for Biopreparedness

- Under Project ORB, 20+ academic health centers would develop 60+ ‘learning objects’ (LOs), i.e., a complete learning experience targeted to one instructional objective.
- LOs would conform to evolving Sharable Content Object Reference (SCORM) standards, which are intended to ensure interoperability of online content across Learning Management Systems (e.g., Blackboard and Web CT).
- Each LO would be comprehensive enough for use by different disciplines, and would be packaged and tagged such that users could search for the access components individually.

AHC Council on Biodefense

- Established September 2001 to develop and guide a cohesive response and share best practices in preparedness across institutional and political boundaries.
- Plays an instrumental role in developing and supporting new initiatives, such as Project ORB.
- Membership has expanded to 22 in 2003, and now includes 3 former military surgeons general, former and current AHC board chairs and chair-elect, and representatives of urban, rural, and statewide system academic health centers.

Congressional Appropriations

- Language added to Report on HR 2660:
 - The Council received testimony during the fiscal year 2004 hearings regarding the significant capability and resources of academic health centers. Furthermore, it learned that in large measure, these Centers have not been participants in state and local preparedness and response planning. The Council urges the Secretary to strengthen the guidance provided to the recipients of State and Local Preparedness Funds to ensure that State and local planners are including academic health centers in their planning process, and making assessments of the capabilities and roles their academic health centers can have in enhancing preparedness.

Other Initiatives

- The AHC continues to engage with possible partners on additional preparedness activities, including
 - Developing the communications infrastructure for a national system for medical readiness
 - Training academic health center CEOs, their general counsels, and their media representatives in emergency risk communication

Quo vadis?

Whither the AHC-SCPHP Working Group?

- Continued examination of academic health center education, practice, and research models regarding public health preparedness.
 - Urban (e.g., NY, Chicago, LA) & rural (e.g., Nebraska)
- Continued sharing of best practices.
 - e.g. University of Pittsburgh medical school curriculum
- Collaboration to transcend institutional boundaries:
 - With federal, state, and local preparedness entities;
 - With other education and practice associations, such as AAMC, ASPH, APHA, NACCHO, and ASTHO;
 - With other academic health centers (e.g., NIAID-funded mid-Atlantic research consortium involving 15 academic health centers).