

Communicable Disease Preparedness Committee
Feb 13, 2007 Meeting Summary

Members Present: K. Doolittle, L. McKee, J. Palmer, A. Throneberry, B. Diven, MD, R. Torrez, MD, D. Smith, J. Balog, J. Gamon, M. Benanti, G. DeNecochea, A. Diaz, M. Abernethy, J. Witte, A. Arvizo

Members Absent: L. DeRoos, S. Lopez, T. Burgin, K. Hill, M. Jaspers, L. Olsen, D. Pearse, N. Quezada-Aragon,

The meeting began at 3:20PM.

- 1) The Communicable Disease Response plan and other valuable links are now posted on the EH&S Emergency Management web under the Communicable Disease /Pan Flu Guidance tab at <http://www.nmsu.edu/~safety/emergency.htm>
- 2) K. Doolittle informed the committee that OSHA has issued guidance on "Preparing Workplaces for an Influenza Epidemic" <http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3327pandemic.pdf> . Key points in the document are definitions for seasonal flu, pandemic flu and avian influenza, classifying employee exposures to pandemic influenza on the job, and a classification for occupational exposures from "very high to lower".
- 3) L. McKee informed committee of availability of new guidance for community preparedness from PANDEMICFLU.GOV at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/mitigation.html>. This document assigns a category to the cascade of pandemic events, similar to the NOAA hurricane warning system, ie category 1 (least severe) to category 5 (most severe). Members are encouraged to read these documents - they offer insight useful to our planning efforts.
- 4) L. McKee provided news of legislative action on House Bill 605 to Protect Emergency Health Care Volunteers responding to public health emergencies. Volunteer health professionals would be covered with worker's compensation benefits when deployed by the Dept of Health. NM law does not currently provide an effective mechanism for making sure injury and death benefits would be available to unpaid deployed health professionals.
- 5) L. McKee highlighted the Mobile Care Unit concept and needs for funding on the order of \$115,000, noting that she would seek funding through Health and Human Services but that NMSU might also need to support such equipment needs.
- 6) K. Doolittle reported that the plan which you all have worked so hard to develop was presented to NMSU Administrative Council meeting today, Feb 13. Council questioned how this information would be distributed to inform all departments. It was requested that the information to Academic Departments flow through the Dean's.

- 7) K. Doolittle & L. McKee will meet with the Provost to present the CD Response Plan and draft a memo for the Provost to review and distribute to Academic Deans regarding planning efforts.
- 8) K. Doolittle presented a Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP) template and will distribute the document for departmental use once it is formatted for NMSU.
- 9) J. Witte stated that an avian influenza has not been isolated in domestic or migratory birds in our region. A NM Avian Influenza web site will debut in March and the new link will be added to the NMSU Emergency Management site.
- 10) D. Smith noted that a recent ProMED release traced most of the scattered bird flu outbreaks so far this year (2007) to illegal or improper trade in poultry. This likely includes the very recent outbreak on a turkey farm in England. Whereas, last winter migrating birds were deemed the primary culprit in the bird flu infestations, per ProMed. No outbreaks have been attributed to wild birds so far this season.
- 11) M. Benanti was recognized and thanked for the upcoming Page One article about the NMSU task force planning efforts and for opening the door for upcoming interviews with local media to bring this information to the larger community.
- 12) D. Shearer was recognized for developing the Communicable Disease section of the Emergency Management web page.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45PM