



Mission

Centers for Public Health Preparedness (CPHP) train front-line workers in state and local health departments, preparing them to protect American citizens in the event of a public health emergency – inclusive of infectious, environmental, occupational, and terrorist threats. Created in 2000 with CDC funding, the network of 27 centers located in graduate, accredited schools of public health has already reached hundreds of thousands of public health workers through applied training and targeted technical expertise aimed at protecting communities in real-world crises. The CPHP network of world-renowned preparedness experts, convened and coordinated by the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH), ensures a strong public health response is available across the nation when and where it is needed.

Importance

The Southwest Center for Public Health Preparedness (SWCPHP or the Center), which covers approximately 300,000 square miles and provides education and training to a regional population of 11,000,000+ persons, prepares the public health workforce, health care professionals, emergency responders, and individuals in communities to better respond to terrorism, emerging infectious diseases, and all-hazards events. The SWCPHP assures an improved public health response in the region by:

- enhancing the knowledge, skills and abilities of the public health workforce in all-hazards preparedness and response
- delivering targeted education and training programs to meet partners' identified needs
- conducting applied research in all-hazards preparedness and response capacity enhancement
- collaborating with a wide range of federal,

state and local partners in all-hazards preparedness response efforts

- participating in and contributing to the national Centers for Public Health Preparedness Network.

The SWCPHP has crafted new partnerships with agencies engaged in public health functions beyond local state and county health departments in response to critical public health service concerns. Since its inception in December 2002, *the Center has trained 8,183 individuals (through January 2007) representing 100% of Oklahoma's counties, over 96% of New Mexico's counties, and over 94% of Colorado's counties.* During the last two school years, the OUHSC-College of Public Health issued \$20K in waivers to health department employees taking graduate courses involving instruction from the Center. The CPHP also provides basic and recurrent training and, for example, has significantly increased the level of education and training available to Native American tribes across the region (38 tribes in Oklahoma, 23 tribes in New Mexico, and approximately 10 tribes in Colorado). Efforts continue to expand and include increasing partnerships with community colleges, career technology centers, veterinary colleges, professional associations, and municipal libraries.

Areas of Emphasis:

- *Volunteerism: Community Education, Action, and Training*
- *Program Evaluation*
- *Mental Health Education and Training*
- *Planning and Preparedness Education and Training for Native American/Vulnerable/Rural/Special Populations*
- *Support for an MPH in Public Health Preparedness and Bioterrorism through faculty involvement in key courses*

Accomplishments

- *Delivery of all-hazards preparedness education and training programs for public service organizations and public volunteers to improve their response to events*
- *Initiation of a project to utilize Podcast/iPods to provide access to SWCPHP materials and other vital information to public health workforce in the field*

- *Published twelve papers, including:*
 - "A model for assessing emergency preparedness competencies and evaluating training based on a local preparedness plan"
 - "Self-assessment in the measurement of public health workforce preparedness for bioterrorism or other public health disasters"
 - "Are public health workers aware of what they don't know?"
 - "Focus groups with children after the World Trade Center attacks" (in press).
 - "Community outreach following a terrorist act: Violent death and the Oklahoma City experience."
- *Developed and launched a SWCPHP newsletter to keep partners across the three state region informed about activities of the Center and to provide a mechanism for sharing information to a broader audience*
- *Participation in national presentations, conferences, and collaboration groups to include Vulnerable Populations, Evaluation Methods and Tools, Pandemic Flu, Isolation & Quarantine, Tribal Preparedness, Food & Water Safety, and various platform/booth presentations.*
- *Provision of Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training (CLEET)-certified Continuing Education Units for first responders/emergency responders*
- *Evaluation of training effectiveness to demonstrate the degree to which individual and organizational competence has improved*
- *Collaboration with the US Public Health Service Indian Health Service and Native American tribes in Oklahoma, Colorado, and New Mexico to train participants in CDC Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication, FEMA Emergency Management Framework for Tribal Governments, FEMA Mitigation for Tribal Officials, and Tribal Nurses Training*
- *Instruction in Basic Disaster Life Support and Advanced Disaster Life Support to medical and emergency responder professionals*

Contact

Daniel T. Boatright, Ph.D.
Tel: (405) 271-2232
Email: daniel-boatright@ouhsc.edu
<http://www.swcphp.ouhsc.edu/>