



**Yale Center for
Public Health Preparedness**

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 Yale Center for Public Health Preparedness ("Yale Center" or "Center"), based at the Yale School of Public Health, fills a unique niche in Connecticut. It builds on work started by the Connecticut Partnership for Public Health Workforce Development, with a particular focus on preparing the public health workforce to protect Connecticut and Rhode Island citizens in the event of an emergency. The Center has particular expertise in evaluation methods and educational strategies, and has content expertise in infectious disease, injury, policy, trauma systems and learning management systems. While Connecticut's public health workforce needs training in various aspects of preparedness, the capacity of state and local health departments to provide this training and evaluate its impact is limited. The Yale Center fills this gap through training development, technical assistance, evaluation of the impact of training and education, and continued work on the identification of training needs.

Accomplishments

- In the event of a bioterrorist attack, or an infectious disease outbreak such as pandemic flu, it may be necessary to provide antibiotics or vaccines to the entire population in a very short period of time. A large workforce, including many volunteers, will be needed to do this successfully. The Yale Center is working with the CT Department of Health and local health districts to train volunteers and others who will staff mass distribution sites. Specifically, the Center:
 - Developed training for evaluators who were participating in an exercise that tested several communities' ability to respond (in conjunction with the state).
 - Works with the state to develop and deliver training for medical screeners and other volunteers (workers who will take information from people who come to the mass distribution location for vaccines or medicines).
 - Identifies, through evaluations of education and training, the need for modifications in course content and/or delivery methods.
- Analyses of recent events and disasters identified the need to consider ethics in preparedness planning and disaster response. The Yale Center is collaborating with practitioners from the state and region, ethicists, and the Yale Center for Bioethics staff on the development of curriculum and training in the ethics of preparedness.
- Management of events and emergency responses based on the incident command system (ICS) is a culture shift for many public health workers. The Yale Center is collaborating with the Rhode Island Department of Health to adapt ICS training so that it uses examples that are relevant to public health workers. In addition, the training provides opportunities for public health workers to understand the need for collaboration and cooperation with other agencies and governmental organizations such as EMS, law enforcement, and public safety.
- The Yale Center is training future public health workers in preparedness through a number of activities that include:

- Implementing curriculum in public health and disaster preparedness, including: Public Health Management of Disasters, Public Health Surveillance, Biosafety, as well as lectures in other courses in the MPH program.
 - Sponsoring a summer internship program, in which MPH students will work at local health departments and assist them with their work in disaster preparedness
- The Yale Center actively collaborates with state and local health departments and health agencies through the following activities:
- Provision of technical assistance to the CT Department of Public Health and local health departments on TRAINConnecticut, the state's online learning management system. Analysis performed by the Yale Center is used to regularly monitor progress and update Connecticut's Public Health Emergency Response Training Plan.
 - Developing and delivering coursework and workshops that facilitate continued development of local and regional emergency response plans. Topic areas covered are Public Health Emergency Law in Connecticut, Establishing Local Emergency Health Information Lines, Planning for Vulnerable Populations, and Public Health Disaster Recovery.
 - Offering seminars on key topic areas such as pandemic influenza planning and mental health issues in disaster response and recovery.
 - Circulating monthly educational newsletters to the public health workforce and the general public on emergency planning issues and practices.
 - Collaborating on developing a pocket guide for preparedness specific to the needs of local and regional health agencies in CT that is based on the regional preparedness plans across the state. This guide will provide a concise list of activities and actions to be taken in the event of a public health emergency.

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