



Preparing our Hawai'i communities for natural disasters, disease pandemic, bioterrorism and public health emergencies.

Public Health Preparedness News

Summer 2015

State Labs Conduct Ebola Forum

How ready are Hawaii's laboratories to respond to Ebola and other emerging threats? To review and assist the community laboratories' plans and preparedness, the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) State Laboratories Division (SLD) conducted a Laboratory Ebola Forum on March 20, one of a series of outreach activities.

The format of the forum was two-fold. First, senior laboratory representatives presented their planned approach to providing laboratory support to clinicians caring for patients with Ebola Viral Disease (EVD).



Lab readiness: Dr. Chris Whelen speaks to experts from healthcare facilities across the state.

Strategies ranged from point-of-care testing inside the patient room to utilization of molecular diagnostics. Each strategy triggered different planning and execution considerations.

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The second part was a training exercise in which participants described the details of differential diagnosis testing in a patient under investigation (PUI) for EVD where the notional illness was caused by either 1) sepsis (including typhoid), 2) malaria, or 3) Ebola.

"The forum increased the situational awareness for DOH staff and allowed participants to learn from each other's experi-

ences," said Dr. A. Christian Whelen, SLD Administrator.

A formal table top exercise is being planned for 2016 that will assess readiness for all microbial hazards.



MRC Educates Special Parents

Medical Reserve Corps volunteer Candy Iha shared preparedness tips with "Disaster" player Anya Maga at the Special Parent Information Network (SPIN) annual conference May 2 at UH Campus Center.

"Kids really love the game!," said Iha. "SPIN is a great opportunity to educate families, parents and caregivers of children with disabilities about disasters and health emergencies that might impact Hawaii — and how to be prepared!"



MRC at Hilo MS Walk Event

Big Island MRC volunteers provided first aid for National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Hawaii chapter, May 2 at Edith Kanaka'ole Stadium in Hilo. The lively event had over 50 participants benefiting MS programs and research.

The event also provided an opportunity for Big Island MRC to practice a first-aid scenario and assess the DOH inventory of first-aid bags and MRC go-kits.



Climate Change and Public Health

Maui PHP staff coordinated "Climate Change and Public Health" public presentations on February 17 at the UH Maui College campus and at the Maui County Emergency Operations Center.

Dr. John Marra, the Pacific Region Climate Services Director, presented to an audience of government, private industry, and community leaders.

He provided scientific evidence of climate change indicators: carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and coral bleaching throughout the world's oceans.

Dr. Marra also presented forecast models that showed what our world will look like by the end of this century.

He also discussed how global climate change could affect the health of people and the environment in Hawaii.



Kaua'i DHO at Waimea Festival

PHP staff from Kauai District Health Office and Kauai MRC teamed up for the Waimea Town Festival, February 20-21.

About 200 Kauai residents stopped by the KDOH booth to play *Spin The Preparedness Wheel!*, discuss family



Community outreach: KMRC volunteer Winnie Tamura-Lis (in red) gives Leah Aguire and Marylou Jardin from Kaua'i Veterans Memorial Hospital a spin at the Preparedness Wheel.



preparedness issues, and pick up preparedness and health information.

"The DOH booth was very popular. In fact, we ran out of our 'personal preparedness' backpacks by Friday night," said public health educator James Tanizaki.

Bike Day! (& ICS/POD Training)

Kauai DHO and KMRC collaborated with Wilcox Memorial Hospital and many other participants to stage the 2015 Kauai Keiki Bike and Safety Day.

The event was organized as an Incident



POD training: Photos courtesy of Dennis Fujimoto, the Garden Island Newspaper.



Command System exercise, and practiced Point of Dispensing (POD) techniques including a secured perimeter, staging, pre- and on-site registration options for the public, line flow, a communications unit, and command staff.

Disaster Life Support on Maui

Maui District Health Office, UH Maui College, Dept. of Transportation's Aircraft Rescue & Firefighting, and Maui County Health Volunteers attended a Basic Disaster Life Support (BDLS) training April 29 at UH Maui College campus in Kahului.



BDLS: Michael Chan presents to the class.

The BDLS course is a review of "all-hazards" topics: natural and accidental man-made events, explosive events, nuclear and radiological events, biological events, and chemical events.

Also covered was the health care professionals' role in public health and incident management systems, community mental health, and special needs of underserved and vulnerable populations.

Some participants completing the BDLS course have already registered for the Advance Disaster Life Support training, which will be held in May.

These trainings will provide more response capacity within Maui County.



Crisis and Emergency Risk Communications Workshop

"Effective crisis communication demands that you look at the disaster/emergency situation from the outside in," and other nuggets of wisdom were shared at "USPACOM Pandemic and Emerging Infectious Disease Risk and Crisis Communication Workshop." The U.S. Army-sponsored training was held March 3-5 at the NOAA Inouye Center on Ford Island and attended by military, health care, and public health staff.



Parent Night at Nu'uuanu School

Nu'uuanu Elementary School held a "Healthy Living Fair" for families on April 24.

PHP staff gave a presentation on everyday actions that Hawaii families can take to increase their physical and mental resilience to disaster and public health emergencies.