



# HEPPC

NEWSLETTER

## Health & Emergency Preparedness Planning Council

April 2010

### Health Care Agency



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## HEPPC QUARTERLY UPDATE

*Responding to a Disease Outbreak: An Anthrax and Smallpox Overview*

On April 22nd, the Health Care Agency hosted the quarterly HEPPC meeting at the Public Health Laboratory training facility to discuss HCA's role during this type of response.

Dr. Michele Cheung, Deputy Director for Epidemiology, began the discussion by providing case studies for an individual who had been exposed to anthrax. Dr. Cheung described the signs and symptoms this case presented as well as the methods of treatment related to the bacterium. Dr. Cheung also discussed the potential impact a large scale anthrax release could have on the county and the role epidemiology would play during an outbreak. In the event of a white powder incident, a field sample may be collected and then shipped to the HCA public health lab for testing.



Darwin Cheng discusses the role of Environmental Health

Darwin Cheng, supervisor for OCHCA's Environmental Health Haz-Mat Team, discussed the process for collecting the sample and the role Environmental Health plays in the field. Supported by local officials and first responder groups, Environmental Health works within a unified command to ensure constant information sharing occurs amongst the field response agencies.

Rick Alexander, Public Health Laboratory Director, showcased the role of the lab and the process the lab takes when activating its "white powder incident response" protocol. Rick demonstrated the processes for testing a sample by showing the participants a training video that showed the



Rick Alexander showcases the lab through a training video

protocol in action along with the timeline associated with verifying the disease agent in a white powder sample.

Kerri Musgrave, Bioterrorism Preparedness Manager, discussed the methodology for response, which centered on the activation of the Health Emergency Operations Center (HEOC). It is the role of the HEOC to coordinate and provide information to the Operational Area to provide updates throughout the county. In the event medical supplies or medications are needed, Kerri discussed the process of requesting and receiving the Strategic National Stockpile Program supplies and the means to provide those supplies to previously identified Point of Dispensing sites in the county.

Dr. Hildy Meyers, Deputy Director for Epidemiology, discussed the smallpox virus and provided a historical perspective on the disease, the signs and symptoms of the virus and the role public health played to eradicate the disease. Dr. Meyers concluded her presentation by providing information related to the most recent preparedness methods surrounding smallpox and what a single case today would mean to the community and the response it would trigger.



Dr. Hildy Meyers discusses smallpox

### CITIES READINESS INITIATIVE COORDINATOR ANNOUNCED



Alison Kellman, an accomplished Health Educator with over 20 years of experience, recently joined HDM and will serve as the Division's Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) coordinator. Alison holds a Bachelors Degree in Rhetoric and Communications from the University of California at Davis and a Masters Degree in Health Education & Promotion from South Bank University of London. In addition to designing, developing, and teaching a wide range of training programs, Alison specializes in community outreach and presentation skills. Welcome Alison!

### SURGE OC: REGIONAL PLANNING BEGINS



The City of Brea hosted the first Surge OC regional planning meeting for the cities of Brea, Fullerton, La Habra, Placentia and Yorba Linda. Surge OC is a countywide effort led by the Orange County Health Care Agency to prepare the health care system to manage the increased demands of patient care in the event of a catastrophic disaster.

The regional meeting at the Brea Civic Center brought together a wide array of health care partners including; hospitals, long-term care facilities, community clinics, and specialized clinics, in addition to city emergency managers and other community organizations. The attendees discussed community strategies for inter facility communication, patient evacuation and resource allocation that would enhance the level of the community's preparedness.

For more information on, or to get involved in, SurgeOC, please contact us at [events@ochca.com](mailto:events@ochca.com).

Dedicated to enhancing public health preparedness levels through education, resource and best practice sharing.