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1. NASEMSO Comments on Pandemic Influenza Vaccine Prioritization

On January 18, 2007, NASEMSO provided comments to the Office of Public Health and Science at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on pandemic influenza vaccine prioritization. NASEMSO noted that “the groups at highest priority to receive the pandemic vaccine include those who provide critical pandemic response functions, those who maintain critical social infrastructure, those at highest risk of serious disease or death, and those at highest risk of spreading disease.” Further, NASEMSO agreed “that state health officials, working collaboratively with local public health and safety providers are best suited to guide allocation of vaccine in their jurisdictions during shortage situations.” For more information about NASEMSO's comments, contact Program Advisor Kathy S. Robinson, RN, EMT-P, at krobinson@asmii.net.

2. Pandemic Flu Congressional Briefing Materials Available

A Congressional briefing, *Where Will We Be When a Killer Flu Hits?*, was held on Jan. 30, 2007. The agenda and speaker PowerPoint presentations are posted under the *What's New* section at <http://www.pandemicfluandyou.org>. The briefing, with more than 100 participants in attendance, featured presentations from Andrew T. Pavia, MD, chief of pediatric infectious diseases, University of Utah; Thomas V. Inglesby, MD, CEO and deputy director, Center for Biosecurity of University of Pittsburgh Medical College; Margaret A. Hamburg, MD, senior scientist, Nuclear Threat Initiative; and Jeff Levi, Ph.D., executive director, Trust for America's Health.

3. NIAC Releases Study on the Prioritization of Critical Infrastructure for a Pandemic Outbreak in the United States

The National Infrastructure Advisory Council (NIAC) on Jan. 22, 2007, submitted its final report and recommendations, *Prioritization of Critical Infrastructure for a Pandemic Outbreak in the United States*.

The Council was asked to study and make recommendations on critical infrastructure prioritization for a pandemic, including distribution of medical countermeasures. In response, NIAC developed a sector assessment survey to understand the private sector's needs and abilities during a pandemic. During its study, NIAC ranked critical goods and services, and identified common trends, which established a consensus that most top cross-sector priorities included basic goods or services, such as electricity or communications. NIAC also addressed cross-sector interdependencies to improve pandemic planning and response. The final report details the more than 12 million "Tier 1" critical employees across all CI/KR sectors and nearly 17 million critical workers identified as Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 by each sector. To view the report, visit http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/niac/niac-pandemic-wg_v8-011707.pdf.

4. AHRQ Offers Flu Pandemic Resources

To help communities prepare for a flu pandemic and other emergencies, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) offers many tools from its Bioterrorism and Emergency Preparedness Program. These emergency preparedness resources can serve as invaluable tools for state and regional planners charged with developing contingency plans for a pandemic flu outbreak. To view a full list of pandemic flu preparedness tools offered by AHRQ, visit <http://www.ahrq.gov/path/biotrspn.htm>. To learn about other emergency preparedness resources, visit AHRQ's Bioterrorism Preparedness Research Program at <http://www.ahrq.gov/browse/bioterbr.htm>.

5. HHS Funds Advanced Development of H5N1 Influenza Vaccines

Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Mike Leavitt announced on Jan. 17, 2007, that the department has awarded contracts totaling \$132.5 million to three vaccine makers for the advanced development of H5N1 influenza vaccines using an immune system booster or adjuvant. "In the event of an influenza pandemic, a vaccine that uses adjuvant could provide a way to extend a limited vaccine supply to more people," said Secretary Leavitt. "These contracts are a continuation of our aggressive multi-pronged approach to a potentially critical public health challenge." GlaxoSmithKline, Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics, Inc. were awarded five-year contracts. In addition, HHS is funding IOMAI Corporation for 15 months to complete Phase 1 clinical trials of their candidate vaccine. Under the contracts, each company will build up its capacity to produce within six months after the onset of an influenza pandemic either 150 million doses of an adjuvant-based pandemic influenza vaccine or enough adjuvant for 150 million doses of a pandemic influenza vaccine. In addition to supporting the development of each company's antigen-sparing vaccine candidate, the contracts also require each company to provide its proprietary adjuvant for U.S. government-sponsored independent evaluation with influenza vaccines from other manufacturers. For more information, visit <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2007pres/20070117a.html>.

6. Marin County Releases Best Practices for a Pandemic Event

The Marin County Office of Emergency Services (San Rafael, Calif.) has released the *Continuity of Operations (COOP) Recommended Guidance and Model Plans*. This document was prepared by the Marin Operational Area Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Task Force. The document includes a list of recommended best practices for several disciplines and organizations to assist them in preparing for the threat of pandemic influenza. To view the document, visit http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/ES/Main/EEP/MarinCOOP_RecommendationsNov2006.pdf.

7. STOP Stroke Act Reintroduced in House

On Jan. 16, 2007, Representatives Lois Capps (D-CA) and Chip Pickering (R-MS) introduced the Stroke Treatment and Ongoing Prevention Act of 2007 (STOP Stroke Act). The bill amends the Public Health Service Act to strengthen education, prevention, and treatment programs relating to stroke. This is the same bill that was passed by Committee and by the full House during the last session. For more information, including the full text of the bill, visit <http://thomas.loc.gov> and query for the bill by number, H.R. 477.

8. AHRQ Releases New Bioterrorism Issue Brief on Mass Casualty Care

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has released its Bioterrorism and Health System Preparedness Issue Brief Number 11, titled "Developing Alternative Approaches to Mass Casualty Care: The Role of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality." The six-page brief examines the health care system's preparedness to ensure surge capacity for mass casualty events at the local, state, and regional levels in the event of a bioterrorist attack, a naturally occurring disease outbreak, or other large-scale public health outbreak. The brief also reviews AHRQ's research on mass casualty care and includes models; resources; and tools for planning, training, and response for health system preparedness. In addition, the brief details the role of the Department of Health and Human Services in achieving mass casualty capabilities. To read the brief, visit <http://www.ahrq.gov/news/ulp/btbriefs/btbrief11.htm>.

9. NASEMSO Seeks Member Representative for Meeting on Alternative Fuels Safety Training

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) will co-host a meeting on alternative fuels safety training on Feb. 15, 2007, in Washington, D.C. During the meeting, attendees will review the initial draft outlines for three, two-hour alternative fuels safety training models, which have been developed as a first phase in the development of Alternative Fuels Training Program for Emergency Responders. Members who are available to represent NASEMSO at this meeting should contact NASEMSO Executive Director Elizabeth Armstrong at armstrong@nasemso.org. Travel funding is not available for this meeting.

10 New York Permanently Establishes EMSC Program

New York State passed legislation last year to permanently establish its EMSC Program and EMSC Advisory Committee. Requirements in the legislation reinforce the program's efforts toward achieving national EMSC performance standards. New York's EMSC Advisory Committee will consist of at least 15 members, including two parents of children who were previously ill or injured or who have special health care needs. The program has been operating since 1997, with its EMSC Advisory Committee functioning informally since 1998. For more information, contact EMSC Program Manager Gloria Hale at ghc08@health.state.ny.us.

11. Jane Ball Receives Prestigious Director's Award

On Jan. 19, 2007, former EMSC National Resource Center Director Jane Ball, RN, DrPH, received the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau Director's Award in recognition of her "contributions to improving the care of our nation's severely ill and injured children and to the

development of the national EMSC Program.” The award was given during a special farewell event held at Children’s National Medical Center (CNMC) in Washington, D.C. Friends, family members, and colleagues from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, HRSA, the National Resource Center, and CNMC gathered to honor Dr. Ball for her 20 years of service to the EMSC Program.

12. New Readiness Web Site Launched

The Council for Excellence in Government has launched a new Web site, <http://WhatsYourRQ.org>, to help consumers determine their RQ (readiness quotient). The site also provides tips and links to resources to raise scores. The Public Readiness Index (PRI) report, “Are We Ready? Introducing the Public Readiness Index: A Survey-Based Tool to Measure the Preparedness of Individuals, Families and Communities,” also is available on the site.

13. NEDARC Announces Upcoming Workshops

The National EMSC Data Analysis Resource Center (NEDARC) has posted its 2007 workshop schedule on its Web site. The first workshop to be offered is “How to Effectively Survey in EMS & EMSC,” April 25-27, 2007. The new EMSC Performance Measures require consistent and sustained data collection. One tool that can be invaluable in gathering this data, as well as any research related to EMS and EMSC, is surveys. At the April workshop, participants will learn how to use surveys to collect the data needed to support progress towards performance measures. Specifically, participants will learn which survey method is best for a project and what types of questions and formats to use and how to: (1) identify the right individuals and create buy-in or justification for a survey; (2) create a valid questionnaire and increase response rates and minimize bias; (3) capture and store survey data; and (4) clean, analyze, and report on survey data. For more information about this workshop and the complete list of workshops, visit <http://www.nedarc.org/nedarc/workshopsTutorials/upcomingWorkshops.jsp>.

14. Upcoming Events (*denotes event is newly added)

EMS Research Ethics Conference, February 7-8, 2007, Four Points Sheraton, Washington, D.C. Sponsored by the National EMS Research Agenda Team, NHTST, NAEMSP and AHRQ. Information is available at <http://www.naemsp.org>.

EMAC Advisory Group Meeting, February 9, 2007, Hilton Alexandria Mark Center, Alexandria, VA.

Second National Pay for Performance Summit, February 14-16, 2007, Beverly Hilton, Los Angeles, CA. Sponsored by the Integrated Healthcare Association. Information is available at <http://www.PFPSummit.com>.

International Congress of Victims of Terrorism, February 20-21, 2007, Oklahoma City, Okla. Information is available at <http://www.victimcongress.org>.

National Emergency Management Summit, March 4-6, 2007, New Orleans, LA. Sponsored by *Harvard Health Policy Review*, *Health Affairs* and the Louisiana Hospital Association. Information is available at <http://www.EmergencyManagementSummit.com>.

Second Medical Device Regulatory and Compliance Congress, March 28-30, 2007, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. Information is available at <http://www.DeviceCongress.com>.

Fourth HIT Summit, March 28-30, 2007, Hyatt Regency, Washington, DC. Sponsored by the eHealth Initiative. Information is available at <http://ccbh.ehealthinitiative.org>.

Fourteenth National HIPAA Summit, March 28-30, 2007, Hyatt Regency, Washington, DC. Information is available at <http://www.HIPAAsummit.com>.

2007 Partners in Emergency Preparedness Conference, "Continuing to Build Partnerships," April 10-11, 2007, Tacoma, WA. Information is available at <http://capps.wsu.edu/conferences/emergencyprep/>.

**Global Road Safety Week, April 23-29, 2007. Information is available at <http://www.who.int/roadsafety/en>.

**How to Survey Effectively in EMS & EMSC," April 25-27, 2007, Seattle, WA. Information is available at <http://www.nedarc.org/nedarc/workshopsTutorials/upcomingWorkshops.jsp>.

The Disease Management Colloquium, May 7-9, 2007, Hyatt Regency Philadelphia at Penn's Landing, Philadelphia, PA. Information is available at <http://www.DMConferences.com>.

EMS Week 2007: "EMS: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Service", May 20-26, 2007. Information is available at <http://www.acep.org/emsweek>.

NASEMSO Mid Year Meeting, June 18-19, 2007, Silver Spring, MD.

EMSC Annual Grantee Meeting, June 19-21, 2007, Silver Spring, MD.

**Scientific Grant Writing," August 29-31, 2007, Chicago, IL. Information is available at <http://www.nedarc.org/nedarc/workshopsTutorials/upcomingWorkshops.jsp>.

**EMS/EMSC Data Analysis," September 1, 2007, TBD. Information is available at <http://www.nedarc.org/nedarc/workshopsTutorials/upcomingWorkshops.jsp>.

3rd International Roundtable on Community Paramedicine and Rural Healthcare Delivery, September 19-21, 2007, Australia. Information is available at <http://ircp.ncemsi.org/>.

NASEMSO Annual Meeting, October 28-November 2, 2007, Hyatt Regency Minneapolis, Minneapolis, MN. Information is available at <http://www.nasemso.org/Meetings/Annual/>.

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