



Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta GA 30333

SEP 25 2008

Patrick J. McConnon, M.P.H.
Executive Director
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
National Headquarters
2872 Woodcock Boulevard, Suite 303
Atlanta, Georgia 30341-4015

Dear Mr. McConnon:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists' (CSTE) position statements that provide recommendations around surveillance and recommended changes in current case definitions of several conditions. Please excuse the delay of this response. Enclosed are the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's response to the following CSTE Position Statements:

- 08-ID-02 "Revision of Rubella Case Definition"
- 08-ID-03 "Revision of Measles Case Definition"
- 08-ID-06 "Revision of the Surveillance Case Definition for Q fever"
- 08-ID-08 "Update to Cryptosporidiosis Case Definition"

I appreciate the opportunity to provide a response to CSTE's position statements and applaud your commitment to these important public health issues. We look forward to continued collaboration with CSTE regarding public health issues of mutual concern.

Sincerely,


Julie Louise Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H.
Director

Enclosures

**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Comments
Regarding the
2008 Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists' (CSTE)
Position Statements**

CSTE Position Statement 08-ID-02

Title: Revision of the Rubella Case Definition and Enhancing Timeliness of Reporting to NNDSS

Statement of desired action:

The purpose of this position statement is to revise the rubella national case definition by modifying the laboratory criteria for diagnosis of rubella to include detection of rubella-virus specific nucleic acid by polymerase chain reaction and to enhance timeliness of notification of rubella cases to the National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (NNDSS).

CDC Comments:

CDC concurs with and fully supports CSTE's recommendation to revise the laboratory criteria for diagnosis of rubella to include reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR). CDC worked with state health officials and CSTE on this revision to the laboratory diagnostic criteria for rubella. CDC will provide necessary guidance as well as standard protocols for RT-PCR to public health laboratories who wish to implement such assays as part of their rubella surveillance program. Because of rubella's post-elimination status, CDC supports more timely reporting and notification of rubella and Congenital Rubella Syndrome cases and understands that specifics with respect to the enhanced timeliness of reporting and notification for measles, rubella, and polio were addressed under CSTE position statement 08-EC-02.

CSTE Position Statement 08-ID-03

Title: Revision of the Measles Case Definition and Enhancing Timeliness of Reporting to NNDSS

Statement of desired action:

The purpose of this position statement is to revise the measles national case definition by modifying the laboratory criteria for diagnosis of measles to include detection of measles-virus-specific nucleic acid by polymerase chain reaction and to enhance timeliness of notification of measles cases to NNDSS.

CDC Comments:

CDC concurs with and fully supports CSTE's recommendation to revise the laboratory criteria for diagnosis of measles to include reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR).

CDC worked with state health officials and CSTE on this revision to the laboratory diagnostic criteria for measles. CDC will provide necessary guidance as well as standard protocols for RT-PCR to public health laboratories who wish to implement such assays as part of their measles surveillance program. Because of measles' post-elimination status, CDC supports more timely notification of measles cases and understands that specifics with respect to the enhanced timeliness of notification for measles, rubella, and polio were addressed under CSTE position statement 08-EC-02.

CSTE Position Statement 08-ID-06

Title: Revision of the Surveillance Case Definition for Q fever

Statement of desired action:

Revise the national surveillance case definition for Q fever.

CDC Comments:

CDC concurs with and fully supports the CSTE recommendation.

CSTE Position Statement 08-ID-08

Title: Revision of Cryptosporidiosis Case Definition

Statement of desired action:

The purpose of this position statement is to revise the cryptosporidiosis national surveillance case definition. This revision permits states and territories to report confirmed and probable cases of cryptosporidiosis to NNDSS, updates the laboratory evidence section to reflect current testing practices, and encourages reporting of species designation and molecular characterization when available.

CDC Comments:

CDC concurs with and fully supports CSTE's recommended revised surveillance case definition. The revised definition provides local and state health departments the flexibility to classify cryptosporidiosis case reports as confirmed or probable and therefore more effectively captures the public health impact of cryptosporidiosis. CDC expects that this will increase the number of cases reported while improving the accuracy of case classification.

CDC has worked closely with state health officials and CSTE on the adopted revisions to the cryptosporidiosis surveillance case definition. It is our belief that CSTE's proposed changes to cryptosporidiosis reporting will result in more consistent, sustainable, accurate, and complete surveillance.