

Contemporary Public Health Surveillance Course - November 15, 2003

The critical challenge in public health surveillance today continues to be the assurance of its usefulness. The use of surveillance systems must be reassessed on a routine basis and surveillance principles must be applied to emerging areas of public health practice.

Dr. Stephen Thacker, CDC

How useful is the surveillance system in your jurisdiction? Are you up to date on the latest recommendations for aberration detection and syndromic surveillance? What are the lessons learned in the 8-Cities Enhanced Terrorism Surveillance Project and what does it mean to your systems? Find the answers to these questions and others at the "Contemporary Public Health Surveillance Course" on Saturday, November 15. This all-day session (8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) will be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association.

Each segment of this course offers participants the ability to increase their knowledge and skills in the contemporary methods of surveillance, including the principles of traditional public health surveillance, application of these principles for surveillance systems, nontraditional surveillance approaches, and how to evaluate surveillance systems. Tools developed as a result of CDC's recent 8-Cities Enhanced Terrorism Surveillance Project will be demonstrated to participants. In the 8-Cities Project, CDC worked with eight selected cities across the United States to identify ways that they could enhance their surveillance capacity for early detection of possible bioterrorism agents. In addition, course instructors will offer insights and practical application examples of two nontraditional surveillance tools: syndromic surveillance and aberration detection.

Lunchtime will offer participants the opportunity for in-depth discussions with the course instructors and other participants around one of the three topic areas covered in the first part of the course. These roundtable discussions will focus on traditional surveillance systems, nontraditional surveillance systems and evaluation of surveillance systems. The course will conclude with a two-hour outbreak detection simulation enabling participants to apply knowledge learned in the first part of the day to a "real-world" situation. Participants will be challenged to utilize tools developed from the 8-Cities project and to apply the most appropriate methodology for surveillance given their situation. Participants will take on a variety of key decision maker roles at the state and local level for any outbreak situation.

Course participants should have experience with directing "traditional surveillance" either at a state or local public health agency. Participants should also have experience designing, operating, evaluating, and implementing changes to an infectious disease surveillance system as a key job responsibility.

The objectives for this course are as follows:

1. Develop clearly stated objectives for a surveillance system that meets the needs of current and emerging public health issues;

2. Evaluate surveillance systems within a jurisdiction (state, local, etc.) using stated system objectives as a guide;
3. Utilize stated system objectives and evaluation results to design modifications to a surveillance system;
4. Identify management approaches needed to make the surveillance system work well.

Space is limited to 10 CSTE members meeting the above course participant criteria (additional spaces may become available as the course date nears). The registration fee for the course is \$100 and will be paid for out of the CSTE National Office. No financial support will be offered for travel or lodging and registration for the course does not include admission to the APHA Conference.

For more information or an application, please contact:

Angela Sylvester
Program Administrator
770-458-3811
asylvester@cste.org

Continuing education credits will be offered for various professions based on the number of hours of instruction.