

Report on First Institute of Medicine Committee Meeting of the study, Microbial Threats to Health in the 21st Century, September 4, 2001, Washington, DC.

The committee is co-chaired by Peggy Hamburg and Josh Lederberg. There are 15 other members, mainly research and academic types, but state epidemiologists are well represented by Patty Quinlisk and Mike Osterholm (see <http://www4.nationalacademies.org/cp.nsf>, click on *Current Projects* and search by *Project Title* for *Emerging Microbial Threats to Health in the 21st Century* for more information). This committee is embarking on an 18 month study to examine the current state of emerging infectious disease in the US and internationally and to produce a document similar to the 1992 Emerging Infections report.

I attended the open session in the afternoon where federal and private sponsors presented their concerns to the committee for consideration and then there was open discussion. Jim Hughes presented for CDC/NCID and gave recognition to CSTE, APHL and ASTHO for contributing to his presentation and emphasized the importance of veterinarians several times. Other presenters were from NIH/NIAD, Ellison Medical Foundation, USAID, DOD, USDA/FSIS, JIFSR, FDA, and NASA (a wannabee sponsor). The issues that Jim mentioned were: capacity constraints, critical linkages, research priorities, prediction, training, interagency collaboration, education (professional and public), internet applications, global role, drug resistance, pandemic influenza, urban yellow fever in South America, international food borne disease and the role of microbes in chronic disease. Committee members seemed very interested in what the impact of the original document had been in terms of budget and program development. During the discussion there was a lot of emphasis on global issues and some discussion of predictions and modeling. I reminded the committee that without resources to respond at the local and state level, predictions and models were of little use unless used to convince those who hold the purse strings to support such activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to attend this interesting and important meeting.