

Communicable Disease Preparedness Committee (CDPC)

Dec. 14, 2010 Meeting Summary (by JMD)

Members Present: Michael Abernethy, Tammy Anthony, Randey Bamford, Minerva Baumann, Benjamin Diven, Katrina Doolittle, JoAnne Dupre, Kate Fahrbach, Lori McKee, Mike O'Larey, Nellie Quezada-Aragon, Darrell Smith, Sidney Webb, Jeff Witte, Jackie Griffen (for Rene Yoder).

Members Absent: Angela Arvizo, Nancy Baptiste, Teresa Burgin, Amy Collins, Connie DeBlieck, Billey Dictson, Timothy Dobson, Lorin Gobble, Carmen Gonzales, Mary Jaspers, Stephen Lopez, Sara Miller, Cathy Fleischacker, Marrienne Panzini Rosenthal, Albert Parra, Pamela Schultz, Marry Simmons, Alfred Valdez, Julie Weber.

The meeting began at 3:05 p.m. in Academic Research Bld C, room 110.

- 1) K. Doolittle (Director, EH&S) called for introductions. All present stated their name and department information.
- 2) Comments about the previous meeting summary
 - i) K. Doolittle received email comment to remove Joe Palmer and that Cathy Fleischacker is the replacement for Dining Services.
 - ii) Minutes were accepted by unanimous vote.
- 3) Old Business
 - i) The need for updated Continuity of Operation Plans (CoOP's) was discussed. Plans more than 2 years old were noted: DACC, CHSS, HRS, ICT, International Programs (needs new rep), Myrna's Children's Villiage, School of Nursing, Special Ed and Community Disorders. Several departments submitted new plans: EHS, Conference Services, Dona Ana Head Start Program, College of Education Dean's Office.
 - ii) Preparations for Campus-wide electrical power outage Dec 27, 28: R. Bamford reported all alarms are on battery backup or emergency power grid; will replace batteries; EH&S will get backup generator for ventilation and other needs. ICT will take down almost all major servers, except safety-related. Randey directed personnel to send list of any that need to stay up. Departments should receive notification to remind all on campus to shut down (unplug) computers over the break to avoid power surge. Corbett Center lobby will be closed and the ATMs turned off on these two days.
- 4) New Business
 - i) New Biosafety Manager – Dr. JoAnne Dupre was introduced and gave a short description of her role to coordinate biosafety resources between Research Compliance, EH&S, and faculty in labs using microorganisms, biohazardous materials, and recombinant DNA. She will conduct training classes at EH&S, inspect laboratories and interact with researchers and Campus Health Center, help manage biohazardous incident responses, and provide expertise and resources about pandemics and disease management as part of the CDPC steering committee.
 - ii) Peanut seed incident – K. Doolittle and L. McKee explained the chain of events after the Admissions Office received a package on Tues, Nov. 30, addressed to individuals at that

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office with no other labeling or paperwork, containing what appeared to be shelled red peanuts in 10 ziplock bags. About 100 people had access to the distributed bags, believing them to be a holiday gift package. On Thursday, the NMDA seed lab called looking for a shipment of seeds treated with fungicide. During that time, one person went to the hospital (this was later found to be completely unrelated because person had not eaten peanuts), and a couple of others complained of stomach discomfort. Dr. Bernadette Montoya started a phone tree to call all of the employees, and directed about 45 potentially exposed employees and students to seek medical attention if they felt ill and to follow up with the Campus Health Center the next morning. EH&S obtained MSDS, and worked w/ NMDA to calculate dosage of fungicide in one cup of seeds (maximum amount consumed). The calculations demonstrated the acute dose in the worst case was 100 times lower than the acceptable intake which is the no effect level. Campus Health and Poison Control personnel determined that the dosage was very low, and specified the potential side effects of ingestion, inhalation, and skin exposure in order to provide information. K. Doolittle organized and held an expert panel discussion to present the specifics of the incident, information on toxicity of the compounds and to answer questions from affected individuals. No long term adverse side effects were expected by medical professionals. L. McKee felt the information was given to employees in a timely and transparent manner, and the situation was handled very well. M. Baumann of University Communications with assistance from DoH Chris Minnick and NMDA prepared a press release but since there were no public calls, there was no need for a press release. Altogether the response of NMSU and outside agencies (NMDOH, NMDA, NMED) was well-coordinated due to pre-planning by the CDPC. The network of known people and structure to made it easy work together during this exposure incident. K. Doolittle will follow up on NMDA shipping protocols, and work with University and agency representatives to document using filed notices of accident (report and copies to NMDA for EPA notification; Risk Management for University actions and Workman's Comp).

For continued improvement of CDPC coordination during events, phone trees need updated regularly. Administrators should keep phone lists with them to be prepared for emergencies, when it might not be possible to return to an office. CoOP plans should contain the chain of command and regularly update the succession of contact individuals. A suggestion was made to use text messages in addition to phone calls so that people can receive information during meetings. Key responses during this incident were actions to provide information as quickly as possible, verbally and in writing; to openly inform people what is known, what the University is doing about it, and what individuals need to do.

- iii) Flu vaccination update: L. McKee gave a status report on the flu clinic given in Dec 2010 for students and staff. Approximately 120 people were vaccinated in four hours. The current flu vaccine, conjugated w/ H1N1, was offered for \$10. More vaccine is available for the same price through Campus Health Center, including a limited number of doses for people who have latex allergies. Minimal activity of the predicted strains of flu cases have been reported in the southeast US; nowhere else in the country. Typical flu usually arrives in NM in Jan/Feb. H1N1 is reactivated in Britain, with 10 deaths of chronically ill people under age 65.
- iv) Campus Health Center updates:

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- (i) Renovation: L. McKee reported that work will continue over Christmas break; should be done in mid-April. Foundation is up and structural work is beginning. A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held and will recognize graduating students, Travis Dulaney and Jeffrey Oxford, who were influential in obtaining funding for the renovation. Wait times for patients is manageable.
 - (ii) The process of medical evaluations for respirator safety and animal care programs is working well under Dr. Webb.
 - (iii) The power outage won't be a problem.
- v) Committee charter: K. Doolittle presented a draft document of the CDPC organization in preparation for the formal policy to be drafted on NMSU board creation. The CDPC was created in 2006 at the President's Council. The CDPC draft charter contains the following information:
- (i) Purpose, goals; authorizing official to be included; scope
 - (ii) Identify membership: Use titles, not names, for ease in updating. K. Doolittle called for members to review, and correct position titles. Actions: Special Events needs to be present; group under Auxiliary Operations or separate and add Conference services
 - (iii) K. Doolittle asked the committee to define how chair is selected or appointed. A motion was made that, due to the sensitivity and critical nature of CDPC topics, K. Doolittle and L. McKee retain the position of co-chairs. The motion was seconded with no opposition.
 - (iv) Guidance on frequency of meetings: members agreed that quarterly meetings are adequate, unless appropriate during an incident or situation.
 - (v) Authority of the committee: drafted statement is to develop and implement policies and actions for the well being of NMSU community. A discussion followed that this body makes recommendations for decision making to advise University officials on issues of communicable diseases and public health. Other State and Federal agencies can supercede CDPC recommendations and even university administration decisions, but CDPC has a role as an advising body and input during public health events is prudent.
 - (vi) Co-chairs will continue additions and corrections for 2nd review at next meeting. The plan is that the CDPC will submit formal information to be established and approved by the Board of Regents to develop University-wide response strategies; we need to carefully describe that our plan is specific to Las Cruces, and that the Steering Committee is available to advise other campuses.
- vi) Items from members: Dr. Webb presented background information about tuberculosis and asked the committee for input about possible policies to prevent a campus outbreak of TB and/or crises in the event of TB exposure on campus. One student has been treated recently and a few other cases are "undefined". NM has 40-60 cases of TB per year, monitored through NMDOH, which is a low rate, but NMDOH describes a more active surveillance and screening policy than NMSU has in place. NMSU has ~1200 foreign students and additional faculty, often accompanied by family members, that may be exposed during international travel. Campus Health works with International Programs to skin test all incoming foreign students, but policies concerning returning travelers are minimal, not just for TB but other diseases as well. One-third of the world's population has been exposed to TB. About 20% of

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foreign students here have a positive skin test, and 1 in 10 of these will develop active TB. The average time between exposure and appearance of symptoms is three months, but can take up to 5 years. During this time, everyone in contact with this person is at risk for TB. Outbreaks, such as the one on a Colorado campus, occur when there is no surveillance program, or surveillance is not enforced. Campus Health exposure control plan requires all employees who had contact with the suspected individual be tested. It is a big project to get minimal requirements in place, without appearing discriminatory, but Health officials recommend a proactive plan to prepare for contagious disease.

The discussion of the committee focused on defining NMSU departments that could have input to develop policies for travelers. NMSU students and personnel have pre-approval forms for foreign travel through NMSU International Programs (contact Delano Lewis, Director for more information). A suggestion was made that this program should require that students and employees work with Campus Health to implement CDC recommendations on prophylactics before travel to endemic disease zones, and check in with Campus Health upon return. The committee will be updated on progress concerning these suggestions and on the status of the current TB cases.

5) Dr. Doolittle thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting closed at 4:15 p.m.