

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE (CDPC)
SEPTEMBER 9, 2014 – ACADEMIC RESEACH C, ROOM 110**

Attendees: Rennette Apodaca, Minerva Baumann, Greg Block, Johnny Carrillo, Katrina Doolittle, JoAnne Dupre, Kelly Hamilton, Sonja Koukel, Stephen Lopez, Ermelinda Quintela, Andrew Pena, D’Anne Stuart, John Webster

I. Call to Order

The September 9, 2014 meeting of the Communicable Diseases Preparedness Committee (CDPC) was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Dr. Katrina Doolittle. Introductions were held.

II. Old Business

1. Continuity of Operation Plans (CoOP)

The agenda contains a list of updated CoOPs and those that are still needed. Contact Dr. Doolittle for more information or for a copy of previous CoOP documents to assist in updating.

The CoOP template is a guidance document and can be expanded as needed. For example, the departments with animal care facilities have developed more extensive plans. NMDA, as the only Department of Agriculture in the US that is part of a university system, has a State-required succession plan; this plan can be used in place of the CoOP template, since it contains the information that defines the NMSU-essential positions within NMDA.

Once a CoOP is submitted with the signature of the Dean or Vice President, the essential positions are forwarded to Human Resources. The job description for the employee in the CoOP essential position will be updated with this phrase:

“This position has been established as a primary key position under the “All Hazard Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)” and is essential to operational continuity and/or recovery. In an emergency situation, primary key positions are required to report to work unless directed by supervisor or public safety authorities not to report for health and safety reasons.”

The CoOPs and identification of the primary key positions are required by NMSU policy, and now the process is active for all NMSU positions, with the exception of faculty positions.

For information on the essential positions and the membership of the CDPC, refer to the CDPC charter document for Establishment of University Board, which was sent to CDPC members and supervisors on 9/10/20 as part of the calendar invite for this meeting. Dr. Doolittle will resend this information to members upon request.

The CDPC designated the areas that needed a CoOP by using guidance provided by the US Department of Education during the pandemic flu discussions. The university policy was

established requiring organizational units to develop a CoOP. In academic departments, the CoOP can be a simple line of succession and a phone tree list, depending on the need to maintain the core functions. The areas represented by members of the CDPC are those jobs that are essential to the operations of the university, that must be available without interruption. Example areas are housing, payroll, student services. The CoOP process identifies the key positions to capture the operations that must be maintained when personnel changes occur or university departments/units are reorganized. The structure of the CDPC involves senior administrators in decision-making for preparedness activities; at the same time, the membership is not limited in the number of personnel that can attend the meetings from any unit.

III. Review of Minutes

The minutes of the March 11, 2013 CDPC meeting were reviewed. Dr. Doolittle noted editorial comments and minor typos that will be corrected for the final copy. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes with those corrections. A vote was held, and the motion carried unanimously.

IV. New Business

1. Advisory for Colleges & Universities about Ebola in West Africa

The CDPC Steering Committee (members from Police, Fire, Campus Health, Media Relations, EHS, and Research Biosafety) plus representatives from International & Border Programs and Study Abroad convened on 8/6/2014 to discuss methods for identifying and assisting NMSU-associated travelers. A letter to the Provost was sent on 8/8/14, defining the systems used by the travel programs to ensure communications with students or faculty going to or returning from West Africa. The protocol for university-sponsored travelers is for individuals to report to Campus Health for participation in supportive programs to advise travelers before and after their trip, check travel restrictions and receive the recommended vaccinations.

A letter to Faculty, staff & students was sent on 9/5/14 to advise the campus community of guidance from the CDC. Universities were directed to address not only the university-sponsored travelers, but also individuals returning from personal travel. Campus Health will provide information on signs and symptoms of Ebola exposure, and instructions for monitoring health after travel. The Campus Health website has posted this information with a link to the CDC automated-update advisory page.

CDPC members discussed concerns that individuals may not be aware of the emailed letter or the need to self-disclose when traveling. Official travel must be approved, and employees are not reimbursed unless the travel policy is followed. Non-sponsored travel does not have these controls, so the email was issued to inform the campus community. Members reported seeing the email, but concerns remain because this disease has such serious consequences, and email should not be the only method of communication. ICT will be contacted to identify other methods for high-priority notifications, especially to reach students. The myNMSU

portal is one location for messages, but must be used selectively to avoid losing impact. Another method is to print material for distribution to populations of concern, such as residential students and their families that travel unofficially. Posters and hand-flyers have been used in the past to raise awareness in residence areas. Housing may have other methods of communications, and will be contacted by CDPC members for follow-up. The Ebola awareness activities have not yet reached this level of concern; however it is important to have the preparedness steps in place to communicate if needed. Currently, travelers are being screened for exposure risk at ports-of-entry; one CDPC member will travel to Liberia and return next month, so he will be able to report the screening process. CDPC members will continue to monitor actions that other universities are taking. If the situation becomes elevated, email should not be considered the best or only form of communication.

2. Campus Health Center update

Dr. Diven sent a report that one case of pertussis (whooping cough) has been confirmed and two more are suspected. Public Health is seeing kids as well, and Housing is aware of the situation. Pertussis is a highly contagious respiratory illness, spread by airborne transmission. The illness is usually self-limiting in adults, but can be life-threatening in infants and young children. Protection through vaccination fades over time, so adults as well as children and teens should stay up-to-date on immunizations to decrease the spread of the disease. Quarantine actions are not needed because antibiotics are effective in treating and preventing spread of pertussis.

Respiratory illness, such as pertussis, flu, and bacterial meningitis, can spread rapidly through large numbers of people living in close quarters and residential areas. The purpose of CDPC meetings is to prepare for these types of outbreaks by putting systems in place to identify situations early, get people treatment rapidly, and control the potential for exposures. Some situations might require limiting activities in public or common areas. In the event of a high-severity outbreak, CDPC members would coordinate efforts and actions to control exposures, increase sanitary measures, and meet with Health Department officials. Quarantine is an extreme action that is not often used because it is expensive to feed, house and guard individuals; in all cases of disease outbreak, actions are directed by NM Department of Health.

3. Miscellaneous item: Antimicrobial soap

A recent audit at the Campus Health Center identified the need for “antimicrobial” soap in soap dispensers, as required for healthcare facilities, instead of “antibacterial” soap. Facilities custodial staff has replaced the soap with the correct product and will continue this practice. This is not recommended for general use in other locations and in most restrooms, according to CDC guidelines, because overuse of antimicrobial products can result in an increase in resistant microorganisms. Some specific locations may have a need for foaming antimicrobial soap dispensers, i.e., in areas that have high traffic and may impact public health, such as food service areas and athletic treatment facilities. The CDPC Co-Chairs will follow up with directors of those locations to identify specific areas of benefit.

4. Items from members

Campus Police is preparing an updated version of the Quick Flip Guide to Emergencies, originally distributed in 2007. The updated Guide will contain a tab for Severe Weather, with information on the campus sirens and emergency notifications. A tab can be added for Communicable Diseases as well, with general guidance on what to do during a disease outbreak, where to look for more information, where to get advice for travel outside the US.

Members discussed the Guide. One suggestion is to add information about utility outages. Active shooter information is already included. The Guide version on the Safety web is up-to-date with current phone numbers. The updated Guide will not be printed as hard copies due to lack of funding. The Police Department may be able to provide printing instructions and make the binding machine available. It may also be possible to produce the Guide through a DACC app, which will be easy to update and accessible to students. Dr. Doolittle has an example of this type of app from seminar in Houston; she will send that to NMSU Police Chief Lopez.

A suggestion was made to add a message to the emergency notifications that directs people to refer to the Quick Flip Guide. The response was that the length of the text notification is limited; however the reference and link to the Quick Flip Guide is available on the emergency preparedness webpage.

Next meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2014 at 3:00 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:46 PM.

These minutes constitute the record of the Communicable Diseases Preparedness Committee (CDPC) meeting on September 9, 2014 and were sent for comments, additions, and corrections to all members on October 20, 2014 with revisions incorporated.



Katrina Doolittle, Ph.D
Co-Chair CDPC Committee
Executive Director, Environmental Health & Safety

Prepared by:
JoAnne Dupre, Ph.D.
CDPC Secretary
Biosafety Manager, Office of
Research Compliance