

# **BioWatch: Considerations for Enhancing Coordination amongst Clinical Facilities and Public Health Systems**

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**Susan D. Ohnmacht, RN, MSN, MS, CNAA, BC**  
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# Healthcare Facility Goals

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- Protect our personnel, our facilities, and patients we are already caring for while maintaining our ability to perform our regular role in the community
- Adequate care for patients (if there are any) from an incident
- Efficiently integrate with the larger response community *including other healthcare facilities*

# The CDC Health Advisory

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“Presence of low levels of  
*Francisella tularensis* in the  
Washington D.C. area,  
September 30, 2005”

# The Notification

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- CDC Advisory released
- Advisory information sent out by DCHA and local EMA
- Informal communication with colleagues from local HCFs
- Precautionary ED notification

# Why the Notification?

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“...This is a national alert because the Capitol Mall area is a **highly-trafficked tourist destination**, and on Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, was the site of several very well-attended outdoor events...”

“...At this time, public health agencies have no reports of any related human or animal illnesses. This announcement is a **precautionary measure** to assure that clinicians are aware of the situation and are able to recognize, test, and report any suspected cases to the appropriate medical and public health authorities...”

# Information Management Challenges

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- Integration with efforts of our jurisdiction (DC) and other jurisdictions (NCR)
- Adequate mechanisms to disseminate information
  - Inter-facility
  - Intra-facility
- Proactive vs reactive response
- CNN, Washington Post

# Information Management Challenges (cont)

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- What level of comfort do we/should we have with sharing specific information?
- How does the incident impact the hospitals and other healthcare facilities?
- How is the information processed during an incident?
- How is information disseminated during an incident?
- Consistent response from local hospitals

# Information Sharing

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- Poorly disseminated information to the healthcare facilities.
- Disregard to hospitals “need to know” when an incident has occurred or is evolving

# Hospital Information Sharing Group

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- Incident recognition and information dissemination
- Further investigation through public agencies, HCF and others
- Categorize notifications
  - Alert
  - Advisory
  - Update
- Establish information needed from HCFs

# Hospital Information Sharing Group

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- Disseminate collective HCF information back to individual facilities
- Facilitate the activation of Mutual Aid agreements in conjunction with DCHA and CNMC Clearinghouse
- Facilitate teleconferences in conjunction with DCHA
- Gather ongoing incident information and provide updates

# In Summary...

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- Effective information management is critical to the success of a response
- A “systems approach” to the management of information is necessary to ensure an adequate response
- Information sharing is necessary to provide a consistent, coordinated and collective response among HCF and other responding agencies
- Information processing is critical to any health and medical response during an emergency or disaster

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# Thank you.

Susan Ohnmacht, MSN, MS, RN, CNAA, BC  
Director, Critical Care, VIP and Special Care Services  
Emergency Management Coordinator  
Sibley Memorial Hospital  
Washington, DC 20016  
[sohnmacht@sibley.org](mailto:sohnmacht@sibley.org)