



**Request for City Council Committee Action
From the Department of Health & Family Support**

Date: October 16, 2008

To: HEALTH, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Subject: QUARTERLY UPDATE ON PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS

Recommendation: Receive and file.

Previous Directives: None

Prepared or Submitted by: Pam Blixt, Manager, Public Health Preparedness
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Approved by:

Gretchen Musicant, Commissioner of Health & Family Support

Permanent Review Committee (PRC): Approval ____ Not Applicable X

Policy Review Group (PRG) Approval ____ Date of Approval ____ Not Applicable X

Presenters in Committee: Pam Blixt, Manager, Public Health Emergency Preparedness

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

X No financial impact (If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information).

Background/Supporting Information Attached

The Department is requesting to provide a mandatory quarterly update on progress in activities for our federal Public Health Emergency Preparedness, Cities Readiness Initiative, and Pandemic Influenza Grants.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Department of Health & Family Support (MDHFS)

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE: THIRD QUARTER GRANT YEAR 2008-09

Planning

1. Much of the effort this quarter went into planning for the National Special Security event. MDHFS was involved in planning for and staffing several venues: the Multi-Department Operations Center in the basement of City Hall and the Health Medical Joint Operation Center (HM-JOC) for the metro region located in the state health department building in St. Paul. The HM-JOC was a first time collaborative planning effort between state and local public health and medical resources. The months of planning resulted in an efficient use of resources with comprehensive oversight of health, medical, and environmental health surveillance and response operations.
2. After 18 months of planning by a variety of health department staff, efforts to ensure a positive event for RNC visitors to the City of Minneapolis were successful and healthy. MDHFS staff maintained a presence in the City Multi-Department Operation Center twelve hours daily during seven days of the Republican National Convention. The department's role was to maintain a liaison with the HM-JOC and provide a resource to emergency management on health and medical issues. The RNC provided a good opportunity to train and exercise in a real situation our plans for activation and response by a number of key staff.
3. In June, a representative from the Centers for Disease Control was here to complete our assessment for the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI). Congress funded CRI in major metropolitan areas to increase readiness for an anthrax attack. The local technical assistance review tool covers ten areas. There are numerous items in each area that are scored based on if the item is completed, in progress or incomplete. Last year we participated in Hennepin County's review but this year the City was assessed separately even though many planning items are done by Hennepin County, per our contract. This review ensured a review of our plans for completeness and to receive feedback on areas requiring additional work. Our final score of 89% complete reflected the significant amount of work by MDHFS, the County, and the region toward the goal.
4. The federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) chose the Minneapolis Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) region to lead the U.S. in testing the distribution of prophylactic antibiotics to postal workers. The CRI program is designed to prepare major metropolitan areas in the U.S. for a possible terrorist attack using anthrax. As part of CRI, if a metro region like the Twin Cities became the target of an anthrax attack, a number of different methods would be used to distribute antibiotics to residents. The goal is to provide antibiotics to everyone within 48 hours.

"Minneapolis was chosen because of its extensive bioterrorism preparations," according to William Raub, HHS senior science advisor. One method of distribution would involve delivery of antibiotics by volunteer postal workers. Postal workers who agree to play that role will receive a supply of antibiotics in advance of any actual attack. In Minneapolis and St. Paul, authorities will contact about 700 mail carriers to see if they would be willing to volunteer. Public health will be working to plan dispensing to postal workers as an exercise in the coming year.
5. Three of the MDHFS team presented to the Hawthorn Huddle, in the north Minneapolis neighborhood, on the topic "Continuity of Operations Planning for Organizations and Individual and Family Preparedness". The group of thirty attendees included a variety of neighborhood and business representatives.

6. Federal support for local public health pandemic influenza planning has ended with the grant year. For 2008-09, The CDC awarded the State of Minnesota \$2.2 million for a number of competitive grants submitted—the most for any one state--to work on innovative solutions to address pandemic influenza. MDHFS assisted with the preparation of one of the grants, “Collaborative planning among healthcare providers to ensure the delivery of essential services during an influenza pandemic”. Our staff person, Marie Hauser, will shift on a mobility assignment to work at MDH on fulfilling the duties as the metropolitan field worker for the grant period of one year.

Training and Exercise

1. We have started our seventh grant year. Some interesting facts from the previous year that ended August 8, 2008:
 - a. Our staff participated in 11 exercises.
 - b. Through various presentations and community events we reached 762 participants in outreach activities.
 - c. MDHFS completed 1260 hours in emergency preparedness training.
2. Erin Arifin recently attended the Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers Conference where she received her certificate as a Certified Emergency Manager in Minnesota.

Response and Recovery

There was no activity this period which required Response or Recovery.