

# Providing Emergency Information Support within the Public Health System

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## Outline

- Review Emergency Preparedness within a Health Department
- Information needs in Emergency Response
- Library Services for Emergency Preparedness
- Ideas for additional collaborations, services or resources

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The screenshot shows the New York City AWARE website. The header includes 'THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH and MENTAL HYGIENE' and 'New York City AWARE'. The main content area is titled 'Public Health Emergency Preparedness' and contains the following text: 'New York City AWARE is a program designed to help keep New York City residents up to date about the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's preparedness for possible public health emergencies, including those caused by terrorism. This website will be updated regularly and is a part of our ongoing effort to promote awareness about these issues among New Yorkers.' Below this text are sections for 'Recent Updates' (listing 'City Health Information (CHI) Preparation for Bioterrorism' and 'Terrorism and Mental Health') and 'Additional Resources' (listing 'Biological Terrorism', 'Chemical Terrorism', 'Radiological Terrorism', 'Terrorism and Mental Health', 'Medical Provider Information', and 'Additional Resources'). A sidebar on the left contains a search bar and a list of navigation links such as 'Learn About My Health', 'Wait to...', 'Apply for a Birth Certificate', 'Apply for a Death Certificate', 'Apply for a Dog License', 'Register a used car', 'Learn about restaurants', 'Get a flu shot', 'Apply for health insurance', 'Out smoking', 'Find out about day care', 'Review Health Topics', 'Health Topics A-Z', 'Animal Safety and Pest Control', 'Chemical Dependency', 'Data and Statistics', 'Diseases and Conditions', 'Environmental Health', 'Family Health', 'Health Care Insurance', 'Mental Health', 'Narcotic Rehabilitation & Developmental Disabilities', 'Public Health Services', 'Publications', and 'Agency Information'. A top right navigation bar includes 'NYC Council' and 'E-mail Update Services'.

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**What do you already know about PH workforce information needs?**

- Administration/Leadership/Emergency Response Coordinators
- Clinicians – physicians, nurses, PAs, EMTs, others?
- Communications/Press Office
- Community Health Educators
- Environmental Health Specialists
- Epidemiologists
- Laboratory Personnel
- Medical Examiners/Coroners
- Mental and Behavioral Health Personnel
- Policy Advisors and Lawyers
- Safety and Health Specialists
- Sanitarians/Inspectors

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**Issues in Information Access for Emergency Response**

- Lack of electricity or phone service
- Lack of Internet access
- Inaccessibility of physical library collections
- 24-hour and extended response operations
- Ability to locate information quickly under stressful conditions – has the library staff or other information providers drilled on this?
- Documentation of activities for shift transitions and future legal inquiries

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**Library Services for Emergency Preparedness**

- Planning process support
  - Literature searching (multiple databases)
  - Document delivery (many reports)
- Staff training
- Resource identification and acquisition
- Current awareness searches

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## Staff Training

- General Information Skills Training
  - Internet Searching, PubMed, others...
- Specific Sessions Incident Management System (IMS) Response section leaders or groups
- Capturing and Promoting Training Produced by Other Groups
  - Within agency (ie, HR, Bureau of Public Health Training)
  - Local/regional
  - National

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## Resource Identification & Acquisition

- Help identify, purchase, catalog and promote/train on appropriate resources to have on hand
  - mobile library
  - electronic books on laptop
  - remotely accessible resources not hosted by health department
- Plan how to quickly obtain resources in case of emergency
  - Leverage existing relationships with partners in areas less likely to be affected
  - Assess vendor capacity to quickly increase number of simultaneous users for online resources
  - Work with logistics section on rapid purchasing

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## Mobile print library



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## Current Awareness Searches

- Scientific Weekly Clips
  - Bioterrorism/Emergency Preparedness/World Trade Center category – few articles each week
  - Captured from BioMail current awareness searches, GAO report and monitoring contents of BT and emergency medicine and other journals
- Searches for staff emergency preparedness roles created and relevant references shared
- Library collaborates with PH Training on email bulletin of emergency prep. events and resources
- MyNCBI set up for an IMS section area

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## Working with your local public health department

(Or your police department, fire department, emergency operations, department of homeless services, environmental protection, etc...)

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## Ideas for additional collaborations

- Exchange resources between Libraries and Health Departments
- Meet police or fire librarians/training units
- Work with public health training centers
- Join or promote your state or local response network
- Reach out within your organization and community

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## Library / Public Health Exchanges

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- Invitations to public health workers to access your physical library and/or free online resources
- Workshops on searching free databases, keeping up through automated update services, Internet search training
- DOH preparedness staff can come do presentations at your institution

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## Police or fire librarians/training units

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- Law Enforcement access to libraries can be expanded.
- State and Local Law Enforcement Training Academies, 2002**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/slleta02.pdf>  
See Table 8 about access to libraries  
Part of academy facility - 48%  
Not part of academy facility - 40%  
No access - 12%

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## Training Collaborators

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- Continuing Education for PH Workforce
  - Local or state APHA affiliate, chapter of national organization such as Red Cross, etc.
- Centers for Public Health Preparedness (CDC)**  
<http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/owpp/cphp.asp>
- HRSA Public Health Training Centers -**  
<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/publichealth/phtc.htm>

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## Health Alert Network

- Health Alert Network  
[www.phppo.cdc.gov/han/](http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/han/)
- Federal, state, and city/county collaboration to ensure a robust interoperable platform for the rapid exchange of public health information
- Way to keep clinicians and laboratorians up-to-date via email or blast fax
- Online secure resource center

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## In your own organization or community

- Work with your office of Safety & Health
  - Training on access to MSDS
- Free materials for your collections
  - Public Health Foundation - <http://www.phf.org/> is one source
- Make materials from your emergency response agency available at your library and within your community

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## Interim National Preparedness Goal

- Ask yourself or your library the three questions:
  - **How prepared are we?**
  - **How prepared do we need to be?**
  - **How do we prioritize efforts to close the gap?**

Reference: Interim National Preparedness Goal  
[www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?content=4420](http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?content=4420)

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## Preparedness for Librarians

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- ❑ **Bioterrorism alert: reference and literature support for the CDC Director's Emergency Operations Center (DEOC) and investigative field teams.** Robert Swain, Kathleen B. Oliver, Jocelyn A. Rankin, et al. *Reference Services Review*, 2004;32(1):74-82
- ❑ **NJHA's Algorithm for Disaster Information Preparedness: Checklist for Medical Librarians**  
<http://www.njha.com/ep/content.aspx?cat=el>
- ❑ Yahoo!Groups member-only list for librarians interested in emergency preparedness – to join send a message to [preparednessinfo-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:preparednessinfo-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

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