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UAB Department of Occupational Health and Safety

Emergency Preparedness: Current Efforts & Our Role in Large-Scale Emergencies

Max Richard, Assistant Vice President

UAB Planning Facts

A Community Within a Community

- Campus size – 80 city blocks
- Work force – 19,000
- Student population – 18,000
- International students – 1,100
- Research labs – 3,000
- Research animals – 85,000

All numbers are approximate
Challenges for UAB and Higher Education

- Colleges/universities have unique environments:
  - On-campus Housing
  - Hazardous Materials
  - 24/7 Operation
  - Critical Supply Lines
  - Resource Distribution: medical, academics, research
  - Faculty/student mobility
  - Open and accessible campus
  - Academic and research freedom

Preparedness Complexities

- Radioactive materials, radiation producing equipment
- Biological agents
- Chemicals
- Wide-spread campus with difficult security issues
- Diverse population
- Animal Resources

Past/Present/Future Planning Issues

- Past
  - Regulatory & code compliance, licensing issues
- Current
  - Regulatory & code compliance plus research security requirements
- Future
  - Regulatory & code compliance, research security, “dual use evaluation”, vetting of research staff
Mitigation Components

- Risk analysis
  - Vulnerability and threat assessment
- Risk Reduction
  - Implementation of a mitigation plan
- Organizing Resources
- Monitoring progress
  - Testing and drills

UAB Mitigation Statement

- UAB has a responsibility to conduct activities in a manner that does not adversely affect the health and safety of faculty, staff, students, visitors, the environment or the community.

Risk Analysis

- Vulnerability assessment review for all hazards
- Project registration, health and safety peer review for potential of:
  - Personnel injury, contamination
  - Explosions, fire
  - Facilities contamination, consequences
  - Release of materials, internally, externally
**Risk Reduction**
- Project SOP's
- Faculty/Staff experience/training
- Facility/equipment /containment design & verification
- Animal/materials control
- Materials inventory program
- Audit/compliance
- Waste treatment, handing and final disposal

**Emergency Response Plan**
- All Hazards NIMS-based plan
  - National Incident management System (NIMS)
  - Incident Command System (ICS)
- Coordination with UAB President’s Emergency Management Team
- Coordination with local response groups
- Materials expertise & on-call program

**Upper Administrative Support**
- UAB President authorized Pandemic Influenza Task Force (PITF): Planning, Oversight, Coordination
- Task Force features:
  - Consists of experts in emerging and infectious diseases
  - Includes Health System
  - Delegates responsibility for campus pandemic planning
  - Reports to UAB President and provides decision guidance
  - Coordinates information from and maintains communication with outside agencies
Command/Control/Response Model

Outside Sources of Information:
- WHO
- Federal agencies
- State Health Dept
- County Health Dept
- County EMA

Pandemic Influenza Task Force (PITF)

Campus Pandemic Influenza Planning Committee (CPIPC)

President's EM Team

Campus Pandemic Influenza Planning Committee (CPIPC)

Triggers

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Command/Control/Response Model

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Triggers

CPIPC Working Issues

- Planning based on Health and Human Services assumptions
- American College Health Association plan and template
- Checklist divided up and assigned according to key functional areas, examples:
  - Research - Student Affairs/Student Health
  - Animal care - Finance and Administration
  - Human Resources - Legal
  - Risk Management - Media Relations

Campus Pandemic Influenza Planning Committee (CPIPC)

- President initiated meetings with VP's
- Comprehensive planning checklist developed and listed by VP responsibility areas
- VP's assigned designees responsible for key functions to make up "working group"
CPIPC Working Issues

- Staff training
  - Tabletop exercise is key tool
- Command/Control, coordinated with task force
- Timetable
- Deliverables
- Integration with existing plans
- Triggers - Timing is everything!
  - When should steps be taken for greatest benefit with minimal negative impact, consistency with outside area responses

Examples of Difficult Issues

- HR Policies
  - Employees with insufficient vacation or sick leave
  - Telecommuting: work/classes
  - Pay issues: classes cancelled or UAB closed
- Student Affairs
  - Cancellation of classes and for how long?
    - When should students go home?
  - Faculty/staff international travel
  - Financial/student aid
  - Social distancing measures

Examples of Difficult Issues

- Security
  - Building security
    - Should some buildings be closed completely?
  - Protecting “dual use” materials, drugs, chemicals, etc.
  - Medical Center & Campus responsibilities with limited staff
- Finance / Administration
  - Payroll and benefits
  - Purchasing and vendor issues
  - Expedited emergency purchases
Examples of Difficult Issues

- **Research**
  - Preservation/protection of research materials
  - Animal care
  - Continuance of critical research
  - Waste disposal
  - Facilities support services
  - Committee review/approval process

- **Student Health**
  - Campus infection control
  - Student isolation and treatment
  - Healthcare facilities and staff

Examples of Difficult Issues

- **Communication**
  - Internal
    - How to find out what you need to know
  - External
    - Media
    - Parents
    - Faculty/Students off campus

- **Legal and Risk Management issues**

- **Recovery post event**
  - Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)
  - Getting back to normal