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LESSON LEARNED

Pandemic Influenza Planning: Collaboration with Agricultural and Animal Health Experts

SUMMARY

Regional pandemic planners should consider engaging applicable agricultural and animal health experts to ensure that poultry and avian species disease surveillance and response efforts are linked to public health planning.

DESCRIPTION

The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals/Office of Public Health sponsored a series of pandemic influenza tabletop exercises (TTX) throughout the state from December 2006 to February 2007. On January 31, 2007, the Louisiana Office of Public Health (OPH) Region VI conducted a TTX in Alexandria, LA. TTX participants represented 5 state

organizations and 37 regional and local organizations. The goal of the TTX was to engage community partners in a discussion of Emergency Support Function (ESF)-8 (public health and emergency medical) roles and responsibilities, expectations, and anticipated challenges in the face of an influenza pandemic. One TTX objective was to assess the familiarity of pandemic influenza planning among internal (ESF-8) and external stakeholders. The TTX scenario consisted of a severe influenza pandemic emerging in OPH Region VI.

Region VI

Louisiana's Office of Public Health Region VI is located in Alexandria, Louisiana, and includes the parishes of Avoyelles, Catahoula, Concordia, Grant, LaSalle, Rapides, Vernon, and Winn.

The TTX participants noted that if a pandemic began with an outbreak of avian influenza within the US, response efforts would require the collaboration of a range of partners and entities. The agricultural and animal health sectors would be key partners in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza. The TTX after-action report (AAR) recommended that OPH Region VI should incorporate state and local agricultural and animal health experts into regional planning efforts. These experts can help discuss how the surveillance and response to an avian influenza outbreak would differ from a pandemic influenza response. The AAR also recommended additional workshops and exercises to assess the adequacy of pandemic influenza plans and procedures for an avian influenza outbreak.

Regional pandemic planners should consider engaging applicable agricultural and animal health experts to ensure that poultry and avian species disease surveillance and response efforts are linked to public health planning.

CITATION

Louisiana Office of Public Health, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals.
Pandemic Influenza External Tabletop Exercise Program After-Action Reports. 26
Feb 2007.

<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=26393>

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