

## Public Health Emergency Response Exercise Box (EXBox)

The exercise cards in this box present scenarios and response-related questions designed to provide a quick (5-10 minute) method for regional public health planners to:

- Examine and troubleshoot procedures in the regional Public Health Emergency Response Annex; and
- Refresh knowledge of the Public Health Emergency Response Annex content.



## Public Health Emergency Response EXBox: Instructions for Use

1. Prior to the meeting:
  - a. Select an exercise card;
  - b. Write the exercise card questions on a flipchart or white board;
  - c. Make copies of the relevant portion of your plan or prompt meeting participants to bring their copy of the plan;
  - d. Add a question to your meeting evaluation: "Please rate the usefulness of the short exercise conducted at today's meeting."
2. At the meeting:
  - a. Work as 1 large group or break your meeting participants into 2+ smaller groups.
  - b. Read the scenario side of the card aloud to the group.
    - For one large group: Read the questions on the back side of the card. Allow participants time to look through the plan and provide an answer.
    - For multiple smaller groups: Either assign each group all questions or assign separate questions to each group. Allow each group several minutes to answer the exercise card questions and then report on their answers to the larger group.
3. After the meeting, use an Outcomes and Recommendations card to record what you learned and what the next steps should be.



## Public Health Emergency Response EXBox MACE Notification & Activation




Two days ago, a hospital in the region reported a suspected case of Hepatitis A in a 32-year-old female. During their case investigation, NH DHHS Public Health Nurses learned that the woman, who began having symptoms the day before she went to the hospital, is employed by a food vendor that sold food at a popular agricultural fair in the region this past weekend. Based on the results of lab tests and the inability to confirm that proper hand hygiene and food handling recommendations were being followed by the employee, NH DHHS recommends providing Immunoglobulin to all people who ate food from this vendor at the fair.

NH DHHS is requesting that the region activate the MACE to support this activity.

SCENARIO: HEPATITIS (PART 1)

### MACE Notification & Activation- Questions


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1. According to your plan, how would NH DHHS request the region to activate the MACE?
  2. Once NH DHHS calls, what is the regional partner notification process?
  3. Who determines the MACE operational level and mission?
  4. Once the MACE is staffed, what are the initial actions the staff will carry out to begin to respond? Where can these steps be found in the Public Health Emergency Response Annex?

## Public Health Emergency Response EXBox MRC Activation

➤➤ It is late March. New Hampshire has been hit by a major ice storm, leaving over 400,000 residents without power. The Emergency Management Director from **<insert name of large community in region>** has learned that a resident has been dropped off at the local shelter by his neighbor and needs to power his oxygen concentrator. Luckily, the shelter has a generator. However, this individual is also in a wheelchair and needs assistance with activities of daily living. Unfortunately, his regular personal care attendant cannot reach him due to the weather.

SCENARIO: ICE STORM

### MRC Activation- Questions

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1. What resources are available in the region to assist this EMD?
  2. What are the steps the EMD would need to take if he/she was interested in getting the help of the Medical Reserve Corps?
  3. How would the Medical Reserve Corps be activated? What are the steps to activation and where are they in the plan?
  4. Are there members of the regional MRC that could respond at this time? What does the region need to do before an event occurs to improve the Medical Reserve Corps' readiness to respond?

## Public Health Emergency Response EXBox POD Activations & Operations




In response to a large-scale Hepatitis A exposure which took place at a popular fair, the regional MACE has been activated.

Initial case investigation results indicate that as many as 2,500 people may have been exposed through eating food from a vendor with a Hepatitis A-infected employee.

In addition to mounting a regional emergency public information and warning campaign, the region has been requested to open PODs to provide Immunoglobulin to all residents who ate food from this vendor at the fair.

SCENARIO: HEPATITIS (PART 2)

### POD Activation & Operations- Questions

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1. According to your plan, what are the steps that MACE staff would take to activate a POD? Where in the Annex can this information be found?
  2. How would the region accommodate 2,500 people over a three-day period? Where in the Annex can this information be found?
  3. If your region needed additional manpower to assist with the response, what is the process for requesting this assistance? Where in the Annex can this information be found?
  4. What is the process a POD can use to request additional medications? What is the process the MACE can use? Where in the Annex can this information be found?



## Public Health Emergency Response EXBox Activating Medical Surge




In the past week, several countries in southeast Asia have reported significantly increased mortality rates in hospitalized influenza patients. Yesterday, hospitals in several US cities reported increases in hospitalizations of patients with Influenza-Like-Illness. Samples from the most severely ill patients at these hospitals turned up with the Asian influenza strain. This morning, two NH hospitals are reporting likely cases.

In anticipation of a fast-moving pandemic, the Commissioner of NH DHHS has declared a statewide public health incident and is recommending that regions prepare to activate the medical surge system, including Alternate Care Sites (ACSS) and Neighborhood Emergency Help Centers (NEHCs).

SCENARIO: INFLUENZA

### Activating Medical Surge- Questions

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1. What actions will the MACE take to prepare to activate the medical surge system? Where in the annex can this information be found?
  2. Who will provide regional Medical Direction and Control (MDC)? What does MDC include?
  3. At this point, is there anything else you need from the state/feds (e.g., altered standards of care/EMTALA)?
  4. At this point, who in the room is acting in the MDC role?

## Public Health Emergency Response EXBox Incident Action Plan Development



### **One-hour activity recommended for MACE staff in small groups.**

Breaking news from Boston reports that a terrorist organization dispersed weaponized anthrax in 5 places in the city during rush hour this morning.

Indications are that individuals who were in downtown Boston anytime after 7:15am today may have been exposed. Many offices have closed early and commuters are headed home. The mayor, the Boston Public Health Department, and the MA Department of Health have announced that the Strategic National Stockpile has been requested and they are working with the other New England states to prophylax those exposed.

NH DHHS is requesting activation of the regional MACE to assist with communications with the public about exposure risk and activate regional plans to set up clinics to prophylax exposed commuters.

SCENARIO: ANTHRAX (PART 1)

### Incident Action Plan Development- Questions

➤➤➤ **One-hour activity recommended for MACE staff in small groups.**

You have just reported to the MACE. Your team needs to assign roles and develop an Incident Action Plan (ICS Forms 202-206) and Media Plan in preparation for your Operational Period Briefing.

1. Where are these forms located?
2. Based on the scenario and the assumptions in your Public Health Emergency Response Annex and POD Appendix, work with your group to develop the following to report out to the larger group in your Operational Briefing:

Form(s)	Responsible Position	Notes
202	MACE Coordinator/Manager; Safety Officer	3-5 objectives; 2+ strategies each
203, 204	Operations/Planning Section Chiefs	
205, 206	Logistics	
Media Plan	PIO	

## Public Health Emergency Response EXBox Emergency Public Information & Warning



The CDC has announced it is investigating a multi-state outbreak of listeriosis in collaboration with public health officials in several states and the US Food and Drug Administration. Listeriosis is a serious infection usually caused by eating food contaminated with the bacterium *Listeria monocytogenes*.

DNA analysis of bacteria from patients has identified the source of the outbreak as deli meat from a NJ-based meat processing plant, *Healthy Family*. Fourteen patients have been reported in five states: NY (5), NJ (4), CT (3), MA (1), and NH (1). Additional cases are being investigated.

The meat packaging plant has been closed, but since *Listeria* can cause illness up to two months after consuming contaminated food, health officials have warned that cases of illness related to the deli meat will likely rise through the next month.

SCENARIO: LISTERIA

## Emergency Public Information & Warning- Questions

➤➤ The NH DHHS has issued a press release and is requesting regional assistance to communicate the risk of illness from the meat, which is widely distributed in NH, to the public. Specifically:

- Consumers should throw away any Healthy Family-brand luncheon meat, including sliced oven baked turkey, maple roasted ham, and smoked ham.
  - The FDA has recalled all Healthy Family products and NH DPHS is contacting food service establishments to ensure these products are pulled off the shelves.
1. According to your plan, how will the region disseminate this information throughout the region?
  2. What agencies play a role in disseminating messages for the public and how does this happen according to the plan?
  3. Are there specific target audiences that are harder to reach and what is the strategy for reaching them?

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SCENARIO: ANTHRAX (PART 2)

## Emergency Public Information & Warning- Questions

- Local police and fire departments, hospitals, schools, doctors, and towns are getting calls from concerned residents about what they are seeing in the news.

*"Am I at risk?"*

*"I think I have anthrax!"*

*"Did these terrorists come from Canada?"*

*"I heard that someone from the town next door is sick. Is anyone sick here?"*

1. According to your plan, how will the region coordinate Emergency Public Information and Warning? How will information from the state and local levels be aggregated and shared among response partners?
2. What agencies play a role in developing region-specific messages for the public and how does this happen according to the plan?
3. How will these messages be disseminated to regional partners? Where can this information be found in the plan?




## Public Health Emergency Response EXBox Regional Resource Request

➤➤ A major Nor'easter is forecasted to impact New England beginning tomorrow evening. Current models call for upwards of two feet of snow throughout central NH, with somewhat less in other areas. All portions of the state can expect blizzard conditions and high winds from this storm, which is forecasted to last for 36 hours.

Because heavy snowfall, high winds, and power outages are expected, the EMD in **<insert name of large community in your region>** has decided to open a shelter. The EMD would like to request cots from the regional trailer.

SCENARIO: WINTER STORM

### Regional Resource Request- Questions

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1. According to your plan, what process should the EMD follow to make this resource request?
  2. Where can this information be found in your Public Health Emergency Planning and Response Annex?
  3. Does the resource request process differ based on MACE activation level?
  4. How will the cots be transported to the shelter?

SCENARIO: WINTER STORM


## Public Health Emergency Response EXBox MACE Activation

➤➤ A major hurricane is impacting New Hampshire. Currently, winds are sustained at 128 mph with gusts up to 178 mph. So far, more than five inches of rain has fallen and many of New Hampshire's rivers are well over flood stage. Seacoast towns are experiencing 20 foot storm surges. Power is out to approximately 300,000 households.

Several shelters were open in the region last night for resident use. In order to set them up, municipalities in the region requested supplies from the regional trailer such as cots and blankets, as well as MRC and CERT volunteers to help staff the shelters. There are currently 55 people staying in shelters in the region.

SCENARIO: HURRICANE

### **MACE Activation- Questions**

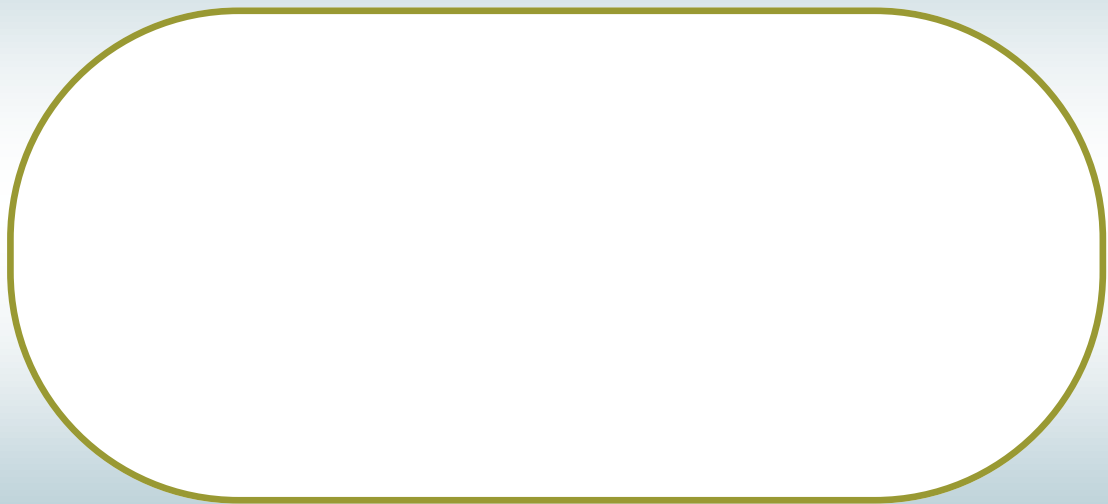
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1. Where can information on the MACE operational levels be found in the Public Health Emergency Response Annex?
  2. In your opinion, at what level would the MACE be operating and why?
  3. Assuming a Level 3 operational level is needed, who from your region could staff the MACE?

**SCENARIO: HURRICANE**

**PHEP EXBox Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

➤➤➤ **Outcomes:** *What did we learn today? How did it go?*





## **Recommendations:**

*What improvements can we make? What next? Who will do it?*

