

Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Standard and Protocol

An Overview

Phil Graham
Emergency Management Unit
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

November 13, 2008
OPHS Launch Day



Outline

- Context and History
- Purpose
- PHEP Standard: Goal, Objectives, Key Requirements
- Implementation Supports

Context

- Public Health Units (PHUs) can play a key role in responding to emergencies:
 - ➔ Public Health Emergencies
e.g. infectious disease emergencies
 - ➔ Emergencies with Public Health Impacts
e.g. power outages – food safety
flooding – safe water

Context (cont'd)

- Ontario's experience with emergencies has highlighted the important role that public health can play as part of a coordinated response:
 - *Report of the Walkerton Inquiry (O'Connor Report, 2002)*
 - *Report of the National Advisory Committee on SARS and Public Health (Naylor Report, 2003)*
 - *Report of the Expert Panel on SARS and Infectious Disease Control (Walker Report, 2004)*
 - *Report Card: Progress in Protecting Public Health (Legionnaires in Toronto, Walker, 2005)*
 - *Spring of Fear – Report of the SARS Commission (Campbell Report, 2007)*

Context (cont'd)

Report of the Expert Panel on SARS and Infectious Disease Control, 2004:

"Public health must be able to effectively manage the local day-to-day logistics of infectious disease outbreaks; they must also be positioned to support any broader, health sector wide response to emergencies that threaten the health of the public on a larger scale."

Other Lessons Learned:

- Need for on-going development, maintenance and testing of emergency plans, including continuity of operations/business continuity
- Coordination and partnerships within the health sector and beyond
- Ensure structures and processes are in place to respond, including risk/crisis communications

History

Aspects of public health emergency preparedness activities have been included in previous iterations of mandatory health programs:

1986

- Provided a framework for the development of public health plans to respond to emergencies

1989

- Included a specific program area on Emergency Response

1997

- Included emergency preparedness requirements in the Health Hazard Investigation Program and the Infectious Diseases Program

PHEP Standard: Goal & Societal Outcomes

Goal:

To enable and ensure a consistent and effective response to public health emergencies and emergencies with public health impacts

Societal Outcomes:

- Effective preparedness infrastructure for public health emergencies
- Increased self-sufficiency of the public and community partners during emergencies

PHEP Standard: Objectives

Consistency.....

- in emergency preparedness and response across Ontario's public health system
- with provincial and municipal emergency preparedness and response programs, as defined in the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*

Integration.....

- of emergency preparedness work into existing public health activities
- with provincial and municipal emergency plans, procedures and structures

Clarity.....

- on the emergency response and communication protocols among public health units, key community partners and government bodies

PHEP Standard: Key Requirements

1. Conduct a **hazard identification and risk assessment**
2. Develop an **emergency response plan** and **continuity of operations plan**
3. Establish a **24/7 notification protocol**, including a mechanism for two-way communication and for receiving/notifying/ responding to reports of: an incident or emergency, a potential health hazard, a reportable disease
4. Implement **public awareness activities**
5. Develop board of health **education program** for board of health staff and **orientation program** for staff and officials
6. Develop an **exercise program** for emergency plans and 24/7 notification protocols

PHEP Standard: Linkages to other Standards and Protocols

- 24/7 notification protocol alluded to in numerous Protocols
- Related content with Health Hazard Management Standard (e.g. hazard identification and risk assessment; risk education and awareness, 24/7 notification)
- Related content on response plan component or equivalent (e.g. Rabies, Institutional Outbreak Prevention & Control, Infectious Diseases)



Development Process

Development Teams

Development teams were established for the drafting of the standard and protocol

- Program Standard Development Team
- Protocol Development Team

Membership

- Public Health Unit representatives
- Emergency Management Unit, MOHLTC
- Ministry partners, Emergency Management Ontario

Implementation Supports

- Resource materials to be posted on OPHS website (guidance documents, slide decks, draft plans, etc.)
- Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (PHEPAC) to continue guiding and informing public health emergency preparedness programming (training, etc.) to ensure relevance and usefulness
- Deliver technical and focused 'nuts and bolts' training