MDSS Alerting Functionality
August 2006

MDSS email only Alerts

MDSS can automatically send alerts to users based on Alert Rules as specified in the MDSS. (See MDSS Application User Guide for instructions and more information on this feature.) Alerts inform the user that a predefined number of cases of a certain disease in a specific geography have occurred.

When the case(s) match the requirements of the alert configuration a message is transmitted from the MDSS – if the configuration was for email only, the MDSS user who built the alert is emailed with a message that gives the Alert Number. The user will then have to login to the MDSS to determine what case/disease was responsible for activating the alert by checking the Alert Number. (Cases do not need to be in a status of confirmed to be considered part of the count.)

MDSS MI HAN Alerts

The MDSS user must be a MI HAN user with a valid MI HAN User-ID and authority to send alerts from the MDSS through the MI HAN. MI HAN authority will be confirmed prior to a message being sent through the network. If the alert is invalid (i.e. invalid HAN UserID or HAN Role Group), an e-mail message will be sent to the user notifying them that there was a failed attempt to send an automated alert through the network.

When the MI HAN User-ID and Role Group are confirmed then all members assigned to that role group will be notified according to their alerting profiles in the MI HAN (e.g., text pagers and telephones).

Suggested Protocol for use of MI HAN Alerts from MDSS

The generation of a disease specific MI HAN alert from the MDSS to a wide role group should be carefully considered prior to building it into your MDSS Alert Profiles. As is the case with normal MI HAN alerts you can choose the level of alert (e.g., Low, Medium, or High level) but in an MDSS initiated alert the audience will be pre-selected to the MDSS role group that includes multiple MI HAN roles (see MDSS Role Groups below).

As is the case with MDSS email alerts, a MI HAN alert from the MDSS doesn't give details – only an Alert Number – the user than has to check the alert details in the MDSS. Below is an example of an email MI HAN message generated through the MDSS:

You have received an automated Low level alert corresponding to M.D.S.S. Alert Number, 1 5 2 6 8 9 0 8, created by BRAD CARLSON. Please log into the M.D.S.S for additional information. If you are not an M.D.S.S. user, please contact your communicable disease program staff for assistance.

Click to Confirm Receipt of this Message

Note that the person who built the alert in the MDSS and enabled a MI HAN message to be generated is listed in the message from the system; and that some of the HAN users notified may not have access to the MDSS to determine why the alert was issued. These are important considerations when building and enabling a MI HAN alert in the MDSS. Further, had the alert been issued at a higher level (e.g., medium or high level) then the role group would have been notified according to their MI HAN profiles for alert notifications.

High level alerts should be reserved for diseases/conditions that pose an eminent public health threat – consultation with local Medical Directors and Health Officers prior to enabling a high level alert for a specific disease is suggested. In any case, when a high level alert is generated from the MDSS a follow-up MI HAN message, with appropriate case details, should be generated as soon as possible after the alert is issued (at least within 2 hours).

Regardless of the level of the alert some follow-up will be necessary due to the limited nature of the message from the MDSS. User should consider a follow-up MI HAN (at the appropriate level) following a medium or low level alert with any case details that are pertinent.

MDCH Surveillance Systems Section Staff get an automated message from the MDSS for all users that generate a MI HAN alert through the MDSS and will monitor this usage for appropriateness.

MDSS Role Groups

To ensure that primary local public health staff, that are responsible for responding to an eminent public health threat, are notified of a reportable disease occurrence in Michigan through the MI HAN the following MDSS role groups have been established for each of the 45 local health departments and one for the state level.

(Local) MDSS Role Group
1. All Local Emergency Preparedness Coordinators (EPC's)
2. All Local PH Health Officers
3. All Local PH Medical Directors
4. All Local PH CD Roles
5. Regional Epidemiologist

(State) MDSS Role Group
1. MDCH Surveillance Systems Section

The following is a list of the valid MI HAN Role Groups that may be alerted from the MDSS.

Allegan County Health Department - MDSS
Barry-Eaton District Health Department - MDSS
Bay County Health Department - MDSS
Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department - MDSS
Berrien County Health Department - MDSS
Branch-Hillsdale-St Joseph Community Health Agency - MDSS
Calhoun County Health Department - MDSS
Central Michigan District Health Department - MDSS
Chippewa County Health Department - MDSS
Public Health Delta-Menominee Health Department - MDSS
City of Detroit Health Department - MDSS

Dickinson-Iron District Health Department - MDSS
District 10 Health Department - MDSS
District 2 Health Department - MDSS
District 4 Health Department - MDSS
Genesee County Health Department - MDSS
Grand Traverse County Health Department - MDSS
Huron County Health Department - MDSS
Ingham County Health Department - MDSS
Ionia County Health Department - MDSS
Jackson County Health Department - MDSS
Kalamazoo Human Services - MDSS
Kent County Health Department - MDSS
Lapeer County Health Department - MDSS
Lenawee County Health Department - MDSS
Livingston County Health Department - MDSS
LMAS District Health Department - MDSS
Macomb County Health Department - MDSS
Marquette County Health Department - MDSS
Midland County Health Department - MDSS
Mid-Michigan District Health Department - MDSS
Monroe County Health Department - MDSS
Muskegon County Health Department - MDSS
Northwest Michigan Community Health - MDSS
Oakland County Health Department - MDSS
Ottawa County Health Department - MDSS
Saginaw County Health Department - MDSS
Sanilac County Health Department - MDSS
Shiawassee County Health Department - MDSS
St Clair County Health Department - MDSS
Tuscola County Health Department - MDSS
Van Buren-Cass District Health Department - MDSS
Washtenaw County Health Department - MDSS
Wayne County Health Department - MDSS
Western Upper Peninsula District Health Department - MDSS
Surveillance Systems Section - MDSS

Questions or Problems
If you have any questions or problems with MDSS Alerting functionality please contact your MDCH Regional Epidemiologist (www.michigan.gov/mdss) or a member of the MDSS project staff at the Michigan Department of Community Health at 517-335-8165.