



Pacific North West Border Health Alliance

Border Health Initiatives: Looking Back - Moving Forward

A Pacific North West Perspective

2008 Great Lakes Border Health initiative Conference
Ann Arbor, MI



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*“Disasters are defined
by what they do to people...”*

Source: EK Noji, The Public Health Consequences of Disaster



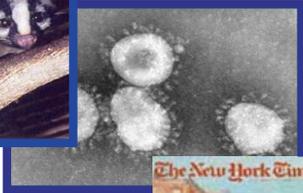
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West Nile Virus



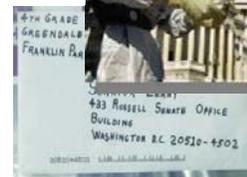
SARS



Pandemic
Influenza



Urgent Threats



Anthrax

Infectious Diseases

Terrorism



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The need to:

- **Track** acts of bioterrorism and emerging pathogen threats
- **Maximize** capacity to address extraordinary demands impacting the public health and health care delivery systems
- **Reinforce** existing informal communication/ collaboration between cross-border public health partners
- **Implement**
 - WHO International Health Regulation
 - Security and Prosperity Partnership public health initiatives



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... and the need to:

- **Track** acts of bioterrorism and emerging pathogen threats
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Reality

Disease outbreaks are rarely acute events but rather evolved over time during which carriers may be asymptomatic but highly contagious.

Effective surveillance and information sharing is essential for early containment



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Requirement

An effective inter-jurisdiction collaborative approach to mitigate and respond to the public health impact of both routine disease outbreaks and catastrophic health emergencies.



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Benefits

Effective early warning

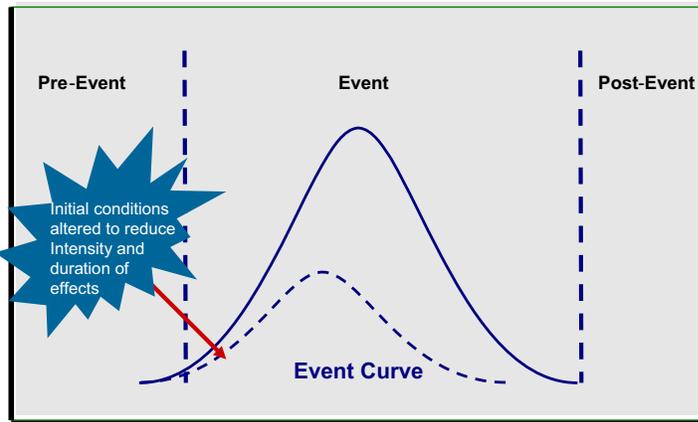
Unrestricted access to health intelligence

Compliance with International Health Regulations

Basis for enabling interoperability and standardization initiatives



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Duration

Enhanced situational awareness/surveillance will enable early intervention to reduce the intensity and duration of a public health event - outbreak/epidemic/pandemic

Source: National Biosurveillance Integration System (NBIS)



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Alaska
Yukon
British Columbia
Alberta
Washington
Oregon
Idaho
Montana



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Goals

The primary goals of the collaborative approach are to:

Prevent and/or mitigate communicable disease outbreaks through integrated surveillance and early notification;

respond to surge capacity demands on health systems and health resources efficiently and in a cost effective manner when public health emergencies arise; and

assess current and explore future areas of operational responsibility that could result in efficiencies when providing health services.



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Challenges

Jurisdictional prerogatives

Resource ownership

Legislative constraints



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Opportunities

Build on establish practice

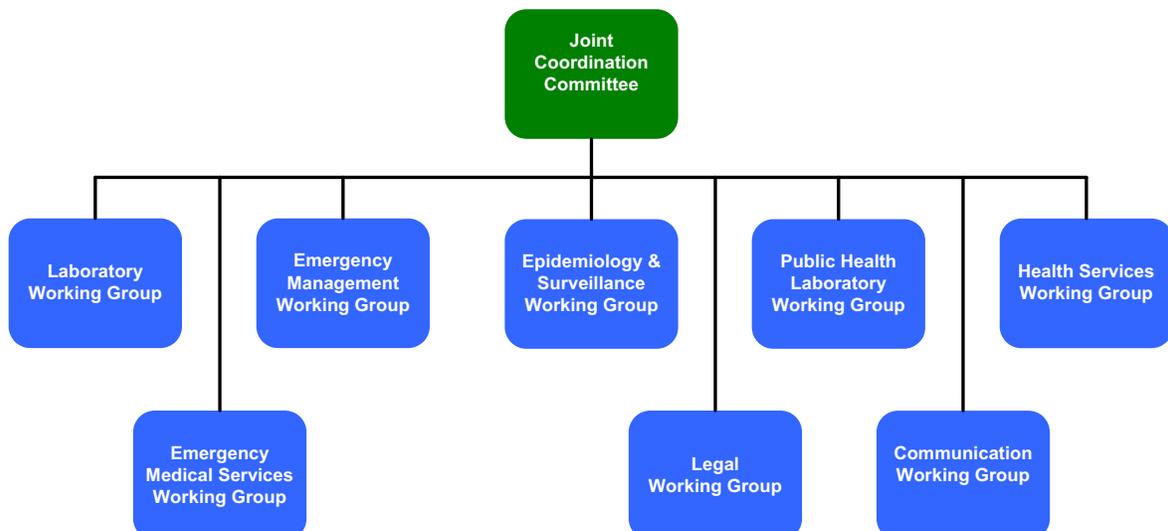
Seamless transition - routine to emergency operations

Enhanced interoperability through regular use



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PNW Border Health Alliance Joint Coordination Committee





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Workshop Themes

- **Tracking Infectious Disease Across Borders**
August 2004 Bellingham, WA
- **Pandemic Influenza Preparedness**
April 2005 Vancouver, BC
- **Building Cross Border Infectious Disease Surveillance and Response Partnerships**
May 2006, Bellingham, WA
- **Opportunities and Challenges**
 - May 2007, Victoria, BC
- **Mass Gatherings and Major Events**
 - May 2008, Bellingham, WA



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Charge to Participants

- **Build and strengthen** relationships
- **Understand** response systems across borders
- **Identify obstacles** to a seamless response
- **Identify actions** needed to overcome obstacles



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Accomplishments

- **24/7 Emergency Contact List**
- **Electronic connectivity**
 - BCCDC added to CDC Epi-X electronic alerting system
 - Adjacent states and provinces added to Washington State SECURES electronic alert network
- **Cross Border Forum for Public Health Leaders**
- **Cross Border Epidemiology Exercises**
- **2010 Olympic and Paralympic Preparedness Planning**
 - Regional surveillance plans



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Next Steps

Establish:

A seamless cross-border, cross jurisdictional public health infectious disease surveillance and emergency response network at the along the entire Canada-United States border that respects jurisdictional prerogatives.

A “bottom-up” governance structure to provide leadership and coordination in the integration of public health preparedness and response initiatives along the Canada – U.S. border through collaborative early warning infectious disease surveillance and mutual assistance arrangements



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**Canada-United States
Border Health Authority**



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