DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Epi Response Team (ERT) Review:
Purpose, Training, and Epi Site Visit

Ashley Rodriguez
Public Health & Prevention Specialist II
Community Preparedness, Epidemiology
DSHS, Health Service Region 2/3

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Overview

- Background on PHEP and DSHS QA Team
- PHEP Epi Capabilities Overview
- QA Review Background, Purpose, & Process
- Initial Epi QA Reviews & 2015 Pilot
- Epi QA Review Tool Development
- Proposed Benefits of the Epi QA Review Tool
- Current Epi QA Review Tool

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Background

- PHEP: CDC developed 15 capabilities to serve as national public health preparedness standards
- DSHS QA Team: tasked with assessment of progress toward the achievement of goals, outcomes, performance measures, critical tasks, and activities detailed in the contracted jurisdiction's preparedness work plan.

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

**DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness**

PHEP Epi Capabilities

- CAPABILITY 4: Emergency Public Information and Warning
- CAPABILITY 6: Information Sharing
- CAPABILITY 11: Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions
- CAPABILITY 13: Public Health Surveillance and Epidemiological Investigation

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

**DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness**

PHEP QA Review Background

- Formalized standard contract work plan between DSHS and PHEP jurisdictions
- QA staff works with program staff and SMEs using a standardized tool based upon work plan and program capabilities
- QA tool is reviewed annually for recommended changes

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

**DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness**

Purpose of PHEP QA Review & Tool

- Used to capture PHEP Capabilities
- Ensure basic functions are met
- Address variability of practices
- Help encourage minimum level competency
- Assess any gaps, barriers, or challenges
- Provide resources
- Assist in meeting needs

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

PHEP QA Review Process: Pre-Visit

- Contact made via phone/e-mail
  – letter to schedule review and share tool
- SME conference call conducted ~ 4 weeks prior to visit
- Conference call with contractor ~ 2 weeks prior to visit – used to address any questions or concerns

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services
Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

PHEP QA Review Process: On-site Review

- Entrance conference conducted to introduce staff, answer questions, and tour facility
- Discussion and review of documentation showing performance and activities that comply with grant requirements
- Identifies best practices and/or challenges
- Generally take 2-3 days
- Time to locate/produce documentation is given if needed

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services
Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

PHEP QA Review Process: Exit Conference

- Draft of review shared
- Observations and findings is discussed
- Copy is left with reviewed jurisdiction

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services
Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

PHEP QA Review Process: Post-Visit

- QA Staff complete report
- Formal letter with completed report is sent to jurisdiction
- As needed/necessary:
  - Request for submittal of a corrective action plan is made
  - 4 weeks given to complete
  - Final close-out letter is sent to jurisdiction upon completion of action plan *with any addressed issues resolved*

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

PHEP QA Review: Missing Epi Capabilities

- PHEP Reviews were not addressing epi capabilities
- PHEP Managers wanted to capture these
- All Regions epi process were discussed
- QA Team was contacted to address variances in PHEP reviews
- Began by sending Epi QA SME

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

2015 Epi QA Review Pilot

- PHEP QA Team had an epi review 5 Local Health Departments (LHDs) in 3 Health Service Regions (HSRs)
- Used a regional epi unaffiliated with the LHD being reviewed
- Prompted need for subject matter expert (SME) to be incorporated
- Ensure core aspects of PHEP are emphasized

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Initial Epi QA Reviews

- Conducted 2 reviews (prior to standardized Epi tool)
- Reviewed investigations for 1 quarter
- Primary focus on investigation completion and entry
- Identified strengths, weaknesses, and made suggested changes

Summary of Significant Findings (strengths, weaknesses, changes from previous quarters).	
Strengths:	Proper forms used for investigation. For the most part, proper documents were requested from providers (H&P, labs, etc.). Investigations entered in a timely manner (per report date). Excellent detailed comments that captured control measures for some VPDs.
Weaknesses:	Some required data entry components missing. Some investigations had no documentation whatsoever.
Suggested Changes:	Conduct quarterly QA audits for required NBS data entry fields. Discussed having clerks/admins trained in NEDSS for data entry purposes to assist nurses' work load. Discussed the need to enter all cases assigned/investigated to show work load. Proposed a tracking system for case assignment.

TEXAS Department of State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Epi QA Review Tool Development

- DSHS QA Team requested a workgroup to develop a tool
- Tool Functions:
  - Help facilitate epidemiology reviews
  - Standardize practice in epidemiology
  - Assist contracted jurisidictions in meeting the requirements

TEXAS Department of State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Proposed Benefits of QA Epi Tool

- Establish consistent state-wide approach
  - Uphold minimum surveillance and epi standards
- Increase opportunities for sharing best practices
- Strengthen collaboration inter-regionally
- Prevent reviews as being viewed as punitive

TEXAS Department of State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Epi QA Review Tool Focus: Cap. 13

- General Focus: PHEP Epi practices
  - Processes in Place
  - Investigation Knowledge & Capabilities
  - Information Sharing
  - Documentation and Notification
  - Case Tracking, Assignment, and Retention
  - **Investigation Review
    - Only with an Epi SME as reviewer

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Epi QA Tool: Section I:
Processes in Place

I. Processes in Place			
A. Types of Processes in Place			**B. Surveillance Systems**
☐ TPs/SOGs*	☐Other (Specify):		☐ Yes (specify):
☐ Awareness of Resources			
☐ Disease Control Textbooks	☐Other (Specify):		☐ No
☐ Indeterminate			☐ N/A
			Comments:
Comments:			

- Identifies:
  - Any and all types of processes in place
  - Resources used
  - Surveillance systems used

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Section II: Question 1
Tier 1 Epi

II. Investigation Knowledge & Capabilities
1. Jurisdiction has Tier 1 investigator on staff?
☐ Yes ☐ No
Comments:

- Assesses:
  - Has minimum of Tier 1 Epi on staff

- Comes from CSTE & CDC's Applied Epidemiology Competencies (AECs)
  - Used to improve epi practice in the public health system
  - Comprehensive list of competencies defining applied epidemiology and skills at 4 different levels (tiers)
    - Tier 1: Entry-level or Basic
    - Tier 2: Mid-Level
    - Tier 3: Supervisory
    - Tier 4: Scientist/researcher

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Section II: 2-3
Investigation Knowledge & Capabilities

II. Investigation Knowledge & Capabilities		
1. Jurisdiction has Tier 1 Investigator on staff?	2. Overall Investigation Knowledge Apparent?	3. Infectious Disease Control Knowledge Apparent?
☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Comments:	Comments:	Comments:

- Assesses:
  - General investigation knowledge/practice
  - Infectious disease control knowledge demonstrated
    - May be identified by conducting investigation review by epi SME

TEXAS Department of State Health Services
Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Section II: 4 - 8
Investigation Knowledge & Capabilities

4. Condition Specific Lead(s)/SMEs?	5. Outbreak Steps?	6. ListServ Subscriptions?	7. Epi-X Account?	8. Memberships?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes (specify): ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes (specify): ☐ No ☐ N/A
Comments & Suggestions:				

- Addresses:
  - Any condition specific leads or SMEs at the local level
  - Knows outbreak steps (*even for non-notifiables)*
  - Subscriptions, Epi-X, and membership accounts

TEXAS Department of State Health Services
Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Section III: Information Sharing

III. Information Sharing		
1. Regularly Share Info with Stakeholders	2. Coordination for Disease Mitigation	3. Relationships with Stakeholders
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Comments:	Comments:	Comments:

- Assess:
  - How often information is shared with stakeholders?
  - Existing coordination for disease mitigation?
  - Current and/or past relationships with stakeholders

TEXAS Department of State Health Services
Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Section IV:
Documentation and Notification

IV. Documentation and Notification			
1. Keep Proper Documentation of Epi Work	**2. Notified IDCU (Fax/Call)**	**3. Notified Other Jurisdiction/Department**	**4. Notified Other Entity (specify)**
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A Type:
	*as needed	*as needed	
Comments & Suggestions:			

- Review:
  - Documented & easily accessible:
    - Copies of completed investigations
    - Copies of health alerts or advisories
    - Notification to IDCU, Region, or public health partners

TEXAS Department of State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Section V:
Case Tracking, Assignment, & Retention

V. Case Tracking, Assignment, and Retention				
1. Logging of Reports	**2. Overall Process for Reports**	**3. General Assignment of Cases**	**4. Prioritization Practices**	**5. Maintenance of Case Records**
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Comments & Suggestions:				

- Address:
  - Case Tracking & Assignment
  - Prioritization practices
  - Case record filing & retention processes

TEXAS Department of State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Section VI: Investigation Review

VI. Investigation QA – NEDSS Entry *The following will correspond with the hard copy investigation*					Investigation Review: #
1. Patient Demographics Entered under Patient Tab *If address is unknown "Unknown" in the address field is acceptable. If city is unknown, investigator should reference the reporting physician's city. If county is unknown, investigator should reference the reporting physician's county. If any other demographics are missing, investigator must outline reasons in the general comments section.*					
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A					
2. Investigator Name Entered	**3. Case Marked as Closed**	**4. Proper Case Status Selected**	**5. Entered Under Proper Jurisdiction**		**6. Notification Sent**
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A		☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
7. Disease specific questions have been answered *(i.e. vaccination questions, symptoms, exposure, etc.)*		**8. ELR, vaccine, and/or morbidity report(s) have been "associated" to the investigation**			
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A		☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A			
9. Notification Sent in NBS		**10. "Unknown" selected as needed**			
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A		☐Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A			
B. Required Dates					
1. Date Assigned to Investigation	**2. Investigation Start Date**	**3. Date Reported to 'County' or 'State'** *whichever is applicable*	**4. Onset Date**	**5. Earliest Date Suspected**	**6. Earliest Date Control Measure Initiated** *PHEP, VPEL & Hepatitis only*
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
Findings, Comments, Suggestions *(address any gaps or missing info)*:					

TEXAS Department of State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Section IV: Investigation Review
Turn Around Time Assessments

- Investigation initiation within the reporting time frame
  per Texas Notifiable Disease Conditions list
- VPDs investigated, completed, & entered in NEDSS within 30 days
- *Exception to initiation: PHEP conditions have specific timeframes for initial patient contact
  - *Calendar days*

Condition	Reporting Time Frame	Control Initiation Time Frame
Botulism	Immediately	One day
Escherichia coli, Shiga toxin-producing (STEC)	One week	Three days
Hepatitis A	One day	Seven days
Measles (Rubeola)	Immediately	One day
Neisseria meningitidis	Immediately	One day
Tularemia	Immediately	Two days

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Epi QA Review Tool Going Forward

- Tool will be assessed throughout the year
- Tool will evolve
- Expect changes in 2017

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

---

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Sources/References

- CDC Capabilities
  - www.cdc.gov/phpr/capabilities
- CSTE Epi Competencies (AECs)
  - http://www.cste.org/group/CSTECDCAEC
- DSHS PHEP
  - www.dshs.state.tx.us/commprep/phep/program/
- DSHS QA Team
  - www.dshs.state.tx.us/commprep/phep/program/Quality-Assurance/

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region

DSHS Health Service Region 2/3
Community Preparedness

Questions?

Ashley Rodriguez
Public Health & Prevention Specialist
Community Preparedness, Epidemiology
DSHS, Health Service Region 2/3

Phone: 817.264.4639
Fax: 817.264.4557
Email: ashley.rodriguez@dshs.state.tx.us

TEXAS
Department of
State Health Services

Protecting, Promoting and Responding for the Health of the Region