

Interfacility Transport of a Patient with a Special Pathogen Infection Executive Summary for Exercise Development

The National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) received funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) to develop three exercises for use by states to test plans for transporting a special pathogen patient between facilities. Two of the exercises are discussion-based and one is a functional exercise. All three exercises can be used by states with large urban population centers, predominately rural populations, or a combination of the two.

Methodology:

NASEMSO conducted a literature review to better understand the work that had already been done on this topic and identify best and promising practices learned through real-world transports and exercise simulations. Next, an Expert Panel comprised of representatives from 12 stakeholder agencies was consulted to identify critical transport concepts and unresolved transport challenges that should be included in one or more of the exercises. Finally, NASEMSO assembled a five member Work Group of stakeholders to develop the actual exercises and associated toolkits.

Results:

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) was used as the model to structure each of the exercises. This was done to promote interoperability with each states' homeland security exercise program and eligibility to use domestic preparedness grant funding to plan and execute their individual exercises.

The two discussion-based exercises are organized into three modules: mobilization, transport, and demobilization. Given the variability in the preparedness status among states, both exercises contain required objectives that all states should exercise and a list of optional objectives that states may wish to include to reflect their current preparedness status. Each module contains scenario information and a list of required and optional discussion questions that are designed to help the group accomplish the objectives. One exercise focuses on an *interstate* transport and the other on an *intrastate* transport. One exercise includes the transport of a child.

The functional exercise is comprised of three modules: Operational Coordination, Public Information Coordination, and EMS Logistics and Resources. Again, both required and optional objectives are included. The first two modules should be played in an operations center or joint information center setting and the third at a location where personal and vehicle/equipment decontamination can be conducted. Modules can be exercised independently or simultaneously.

The toolkits contain templates for the documents that HSEEP requires (e.g. exercise evaluation guides, Controller/Evaluator Handbook). A participant evaluation form template is included.