



## **National Association of State EMS Officials**

201 Park Washington Court • Falls Church, VA 22046-4527 • [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org)  
703-538-1799 • Fax 703-241-5603 • [info@nasemso.org](mailto:info@nasemso.org)

*Contact* Joe Ferrell  
*Telephone* 515-291-2550  
*Email* [joe@nasemso.org](mailto:joe@nasemso.org)

## **Rhode Island Joins National Collaborative for Bio-Preparedness**

**July 21, 2017** (Falls Church, Va.) – The State of Rhode Island’s Department of Health has completed a Data Use Agreement and Analytics Agreement with the University of North Carolina (UNC) to join the National Collaborative for Bio-Preparedness (NCBP). Rhode Island will be submitting National EMS Information System (NEMSIS) data elements both to assist in national preparedness and to enhance the state’s ability to visualize their data with other data layers of relevance.

“It is important for Rhode Island to contribute in any way possible to the national landscape of EMS,” said Jason Rhodes, chief for the Center for EMS, Rhode Island. “Providing data to NEMSIS, and now NCBP, is a meaningful way to do so. I think it is an exciting time in the field of EMS to be able to provide data to the NCBP for the purposes of syndromic surveillance and affect public health outcomes. The collaborative will greatly assist a small state like Rhode Island in analyzing the rich data source collected from local EMS agencies.” Rhode Island’s Department of Health plans to share information derived for the NCBP with the state’s emergency departments.

NCBP was formed to enhance the nation’s bio-preparedness by establishing a network of observers of health and safety events to improve national preparedness. The system is designed to provide near-real time warning of unusual events (i.e. outbreaks or clusters of events of interest to public health preparedness, law enforcement and emergency management) exposed by the data. NCBP enables collaboration among local and state governments and owners of critical infrastructure, while providing situational awareness to the national preparedness enterprise. The NCBP is a network of data owners using a common platform to improve the data owners’ operational processes.

The Department of Homeland Security Office of Health Affairs has sponsored the development of the NCBP to be connected with data owners. Data owners bring value to the Collaborative through their participation and by allowing their data to be analyzed within the system, while the data owners maintain total control of access to their data. Users of the system contribute to the design of the tools and dashboards through close engagement with the NCBP development team.

The NCBP and UNC are working closely with the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) to develop and grow the Collaborative through state EMS offices. NASEMSO has partnered with the NCBP because of the value the analytics can provide to the NEMSIS data that state EMS offices collect. The NCBP has created a pathway to contribute to state specific surveillance and offer real time value to state epidemiologists and state health officers.

*The National Association of State EMS Officials is a leading national organization for EMS, a respected voice for national EMS policy with comprehensive concern and commitment for the development of effective, integrated, community-based universal and consistent EMS systems. Its members are the leaders of their state and territory EMS systems. State EMS Offices that are interested in participating in the NCBP should contact Joe Ferrell at [joe@nasemso.org](mailto:joe@nasemso.org) or 515-291-2550.*

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