

RC/PIO News & Notes 4-5-2024



FROM Eric Jens, GA DPH Risk Communicator
Contents may be FYUO – FOR YOUR USE ONLY

News and Notes

There is a wide variety of topics this week including a Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication class review, a visit from international health professionals and a look at some upcoming events and endeavors. Clean up continues following tornados in Rockdale and Crisp Counties this week.

International Visitors

On Thursday, state DPH EPR welcomed 28 international visitors from 22 countries to the state Emergency Operation Center. There was great diversity among the countries from which they traveled including Kazakhstan, Cambodia, Mongolia, Zimbabwe, and Japan. Hosted by CDC, the visitors asked great questions as we provided an overview of emergency response operations in Georgia. We learned about natural disasters, such as drought, that impact their counties, along with a host endemic disease threats. The group is visiting other EOC's including CDC, Henry County, and Washington DC.



PHEP Communication Projects

State Communications PHEP projects proposed for the next budget period include two more DPH Media / Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) classes, an annual statewide risk communicators meeting, updates to the state CERC plan, a multi-disciplinary tabletop exercise and updates to the Limited English Proficiency / Sensory Impairment (LEP/SI) database. Work has already begun on most of these projects, and we'll have more details as progress continues. The Northwest Health district has already requested a Media / CERC training, which is tentatively slated for September. If you would like to host the next class in your district, probably in January or February, please reach out.

CERC Training Review

Reviewing the pre and post-test information from the March 20th DPH Media / Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication training held in Albany it was determined:

- 57.7% increase in confidence in one's role in developing public messages.
- 67.7% increase in knowing the elements involved in public messages.
- 69.2% increase in understanding relationships between Public Information Officers and Subject Matter Experts.

Thanks to all those who took part in the class and completed the surveys and all those who helped put the class together. The additional comments are also appreciated:

I really appreciated the mock interviews. They allowed me to show my team what it's like in the field and dealing with on-the-spot questions. I think including group discussions on how to respond to difficult questions or those that can violate legal policy would be another great opportunity to expand our knowledge.

I learned about the 6 principles of CERC. Be First, Be Right, Be Credible, Express empathy, Promote action, Show respect.

I learned how to use Bridges. I learned the difference between Dis, Mis, and Mal-information. GREAT training.

Relationship of unified command and its structure. JIC and info sharing.

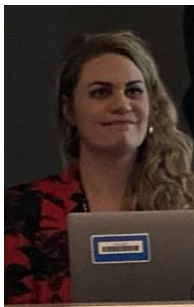
I enjoyed the class. It was very informative and showed us what we do and do not need to do when asked for an interview. I think all left feeling more confident. Thank you for facilitating this class. I appreciate it. I would recommend this class to anyone who has to do public speaking for presentations as well as with the media.

I learned that you should consult your PIO and SME, prior to doing an interview to ensure that the message delivered will be effective and correct for the situation.

Be direct, be confident/informative, and be gone!

Farewell

PHEP Project Coordinator Kelsey Brown will be greatly missed as she moves on for a position with the Defense Logistics Agency at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. She starts this new adventure in just more than two weeks. Kelsey has been so friendly and helpful in a wide range of endeavors from coaching us through Teams to facilitating workgroups to valuable insight into projects that might seem well outside the box. We wish her all the best.



Emory Networking



The Student Outbreak Response Team (SORT) hosted the 7th annual networking night with the Humanitarian Emergency Research Team (HERT) last week Thursday. State DPH and Fulton County Public Health professionals held a short panel discussion before conversing with students at the Margaret H. Rollins Ballroom in the R. Randall Rollins Building on Emory's Atlanta campus.



Solar Eclipse

Monday there will be a partial solar eclipse. In Georgia it begins at 1:45 pm and ends at 4:20 pm with maximum coverage at 88-percent occurring at 3:04 pm. The National Public Health Information Coalition has posted some safe viewing tips in the weekly highlights report:

On April 8, it's crucial to prioritize public health by ensuring safe viewing practices. Special solar eclipse glasses are essential for direct viewing, as looking at the sun without proper eye protection—even for a short duration—can lead to severe eye damage or even blindness due to solar retinopathy. Read more from NPR [here](#).



Next Week Preview

Another international delegation is scheduled to visit the state DPH EOC on Thursday next week, coming from Latin America and hosted by the Georgia Council for International Visitors. The quarterly state PHEP staff meeting will also be held on Thursday.

About “News & Notes”

“News & Notes” is a weekly communication aimed at risk communicators and public information officers within Georgia’s 18 public health districts. The goal of the communication is to increase preparedness through the exchange of information about significant events, training, and other planned activities. Some information herein may be considered FYUO or For Your Use Only. Please be judicious when forwarding. For questions, comments or to submit information for inclusion, contact Eric Jens at Eric.Jens@dph.ga.gov