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## Emergency Preparedness: Z CH 26

### On-line content (1 H)

Review the information provided on the CDC website: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/health-professionals.asp> and place your answers to the following questions in the Z-CH # 26 drop box by 0800 on April 3, 2023.

### **COCA- clinical outreach and community activity:**

**Address what COCA does, who they serve, products and services.**

Clinical outreach and community activity (COCA) prepares clinicians for emergency response and emerging public health threats. COCA provides timely, accurate, and credible information. Overall, COCA aids in strengthening the response of clinicians to emergencies and public threats by partnering with national clinician organizations to improve information-sharing networks.

COCA serves many different clinical professionals for example physicians, nurses, physician assistants, pharmacists, paramedics, veterinarians, epidemiologists, public health practitioners, and health department officials.

Clinical outreach and community activity (COCA) provides many products and services to support informational needs of clinicians. They offer conference calls/webinars with CDC guidance on oncoming threats to public health, newsletters to quickly disseminate vital information to the healthcare community, conference and training opportunities, clinical support via email for any questions, and continuing education opportunities.

### **CERC- Crisis emergency risk communication:**

**What is CERC?**

CERC stands for crisis emergency risk communication, and it is a program that offers training on crisis and emergency communication. It utilizes evidence-based practice from past medical emergencies to determine the most effective way of communicating as well as research from the fields of public health, psychology, and emergency risk communication. CERC program offers tools and training to aid healthcare workers in effective communication during emergencies.

**What type of training is available through CERC?**

CERC offers in-person and online training on crisis and emergency risk communication.

**What is the media's role in a crisis, disaster, or emergency? (CERC Corner)**

The media's role in crisis, disaster, or emergency is to discuss and present emergencies and how communication was used. CERC corners are based on content from the CDC's CERC manual

and bring crisis emergency risk communication to life. It is a way for people to learn how others are using CERC for effective communication during emergencies.

## **Laboratory Information:**

**Open Biological Agent Emergencies and read over Ready.gov Bioterrorism under the info for the General Public section. Provide a summary of Bioterrorism including before, during, and after a Biological threat.**

Biological agents are toxins or organisms that can cause extreme harm to individuals and even cause death. These agents can even kill animals and crops. Biological agent exposure can be intentional or accidental. There are three types: bacteria, viruses, and toxins. It is spread through contact and contamination.

Before a biohazard exposure, it is good to prepare. An emergency event like this may not be made aware to you immediately and is usually identified by an unordinary wave of illness seeking medical attention. The public should then be made aware via TV, phone, etc. To prepare it is good to build an emergency supply kit and make an emergency family plan. To prepare you should also ensure that everyone in your family is up to date on immunizations. You can also consider investing in a High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filter in your furnace to filter out potential biohazard agents from entering your home.

During an exposure it is important to watch TV, listen to the radio, or check the internet for official news and information regarding signs and symptoms, areas in danger, if medications or vaccinations are being used, and where to seek medical attention if needed. Public health officials may not immediately have a plan since the first sign of a biohazard exposure is when symptoms are noticed. It will take time for instructions to be clear. During exposure, it is also important to get away from an affected area. While doing so cover your mouth and nose with layers of fabric to act as an air filter while still allowing you to breathe. If it is an infectious organism causing the emergency utilize a mask to stop the spread. If you have been exposed remove clothing and bag it up including items, then follow instructions for appropriate disposal. Then wash yourself and apply clean clothes. Contact authorities if exposure has happened. You may be told to quarantine. If you are categorized as a high-risk person, then you should seek medical attention as soon as you begin having symptoms. During a biohazard emergency, it is vital that you follow the instructions doctors and public officials are releasing. Avoiding crowds, washing your hands, and not sharing food/utensils will all aid in decreasing the spread.

After a biohazard exposure, you should continue to follow all instructions and updates from doctors and public officials on how to proceed. Medical services may be handled differently due to high demand.

## **Health Alert network (HAN):**

### **What is the purpose?**

The purpose of Health Alert Network (HAN) is to inform a wide variety of people concerning urgent public health concerns and incidents. There are more than one million recipients. HAN helps develop protocols and allows for rapid spread of public health information.

### **Report on HAN No. 483-Important Updates on COVID-19 Therapeutics for Treatment and Prevention: Provide a summary of the information from this update including recommendations for clinicians and the public?**

This update was to inform public health officials and healthcare professionals on ways to improve the use of therapeutics for treatment of COVID-19 and the prevention of poor outcomes. It talks about Omicron the strain of COVID-19 that was circulating at that time and how antiviral medications such as ritonavir, nirmatrelvir, remdesivir, and molnupiravir can prevent severe disease, hospitalization, and death but are not being widely utilized.

Healthcare providers were recommended to do many things. For one they were told to stay up to date with therapeutics, drug interactions, and circulating variants. Websites were linked underneath for accessibility to this information. Clinicians were prompted to study the different antiviral medications and have a thorough understanding of the distinctions between them to make informed medical decisions when it came time. Before prescribing any of the antiviral medication options it was stated the clinician should first look at any restrictions, renal function, hepatic function, and other medications being taken by the patient. Clinicians were recommended to encourage patients to take part in early testing for COVID-19-like symptoms especially if the patient had immunosuppression. Clinicians were notified that treatment initiation with antiviral medication must be started within 5-7 days of symptom onset. They were also notified to educate patients about prevention measures such as masks and the benefits of treatments for severe disease to prevent serious outcomes from COVID-19 infection. Lastly, they were told to recommend that individuals 6 months and older who are eligible receive one updated vaccine if it has been at least two months since they received their most recent COVID-19 dose.

The public was also recommended to do a series of things. The first recommendation mentioned was encouraging the public to take part in early testing as soon as symptoms began especially if above age 50 or have a health concern that puts you at increased risk of poor outcomes from a COVID-19 infection. Individuals 65 years or older or have a condition that puts them at increased risk should also consider getting an influenza test done. It recommends that the patients find ways to get treatment and receive treatment early because antivirals work best when started within 5-7 days of symptom onset. The public was instructed to contact their healthcare provider as soon as possible after a positive home COVID-19 test. The public was recommended to stay up to date with vaccinations including both influenza and COVID-19. Lastly, the public was told to protect themselves, family, and friends especially those with immunosuppression with preventative measures including masks, distance, ventilation, staying home when sick, and developing a plan.