

Introduction to Outbreak Investigation

INTENDED AUDIENCE

Frontline public health practitioners who need to understand the components of an outbreak investigation or who might be called upon to assist in an outbreak investigation.

This course may also be useful for healthcare providers in private practice, laboratorians, emergency response and bioterrorism preparedness planners who need to understand what an outbreak investigation consists of and who is typically involved.

FORMAT

Web-based, Flash presentation. This online module has an audio narration and interactive exercises and scenarios.

ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE

This module takes approximately one hour to complete.

LEAD COURSE DEVELOPER

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CO-SPONSOR

This course is co-sponsored by the University of Washington School of Nursing, an accredited provider of continuing nursing education (CNE) by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. Participants who successfully complete the course are eligible to receive 1.0 CNE contact hours (1.0 clock hours).

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

See <http://www.nwcphp.org/outbreak>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This Web-based, awareness-level course reviews the steps involved in an outbreak investigation, including determining whether an outbreak exists, establishing a case definition, descriptive epidemiology, principles of generating and testing hypotheses, and how to communicate findings.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- List indicators of a potential disease outbreak
- Describe the steps in conducting outbreak investigations
- Identify key communication considerations during outbreak investigations
- Describe public health actions that may result from outbreak investigations

COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED

This module provides an awareness level training in the following epidemiology competency and subcompetencies developed by the University of Washington (www.nwcphp.org/epi/competencies).

Competency	Subcompetency
Design and conduct an outbreak investigation. (Competency 2)	A. Monitor for recognition of a potential disease outbreak.
	B. Determine if a potential outbreak exists.
	D. Establish a case definition based on person, place and time.
	F. Establish the background rate of disease.
	G. Find additional cases, determine extent of the outbreak.
	H. Examine the descriptive features of the outbreak.
	I. Formulate a hypothesis of disease causation.
	K. Collect and test clinical and environmental samples.
	L. Put control measures into effect.
	M. Interact with the public and the media.



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About the Course Developer

Jeffrey S. Duchin, MD, is Chief, Communicable Disease Control, Epidemiology and Immunization Section, Public Health - Seattle & King County. He also holds appointments at the University of Washington in the School of Medicine and in the School of Public Health and Community Medicine. He has worked with NWCPHP on preparedness resources for clinicians.