

COMMUNICATING

DURING EMERGENCIES

AFTER-ACTION REPORT

AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Based on a template provided by the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) <https://www.preptoolkit.org/web/hseep-resources/improvement-planning>

Exercise Overview

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Exercise Name | Communicating During Emergencies |
| Exercise Dates | [Indicate the start and end dates of the exercise] |
| Scope | This exercise is a tabletop exercise planned for [exercise duration] at [exercise location]. Exercise play is limited to [exercise parameters]. |
| Mission Area(s) | [Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and/or Recovery] |
| Capabilities | This exercise touches on the following CDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) capabilities:  1.2 Build community partnerships to support health preparedness  4.1: Activate the emergency public health information system  4.2: Determine the need for a joint public information system  4.3: Establish and participate in information system operations  4.4: Establish avenues for public interaction and information exchange  4.5: Issue public information, alerts, warnings, and notifications  6.1 Identify stakeholders to be incorporated into information flow  6.2: Identify and develop rules and data elements for sharing  6.3 Exchange information to determine a common operating picture |
| Objectives | * Identify your agency’s current strengths and gaps in emergency communication and coordination * Review and list the roles, plans, and procedures related to emergency communication * Identify issues related to building effective communication channels between public health, health care, and the public, including vulnerable populations * Incorporate objectively assessed and research-validated evidence and current best practices into your agency’s PHEP communications protocols. |
| Threat or Hazard | Pandemic influenza |
| Scenario | This tabletop exercise simulates a major, multi-agency incident in a large county (population of two million). The tabletop will enable participants to identify the strengths/gaps in current policies, procedures, and resources related to communication systems during a pandemic influenza. |
| Sponsor | [Insert the name of the sponsor organization, as well as any grant programs being utilized, if applicable] |
| Participating Organizations | [Insert a brief summary of the total number of participants and participation level (i.e., Federal, State, local, Tribal, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and/or international agencies).] |
| Point of Contact | [Insert the name, title, agency, address, phone number, and email address of the primary exercise POC (e.g., exercise director or exercise sponsor)] |

The After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) aligns exercise objectives with preparedness doctrine to include the National Preparedness Goal and related frameworks and guidance. Exercise information required for preparedness reporting and trend analysis is included; users are encouraged to add additional sections as needed to support their own organizational needs.

Analysis of Core Capabilities

Aligning exercise objectives and core capabilities provides a consistent taxonomy for evaluation that transcends individual exercises to support preparedness reporting and trend analysis. This table includes the exercise objectives, aligned core capabilities, and performance ratings for each core capability that may be touched upon during the tabletop exercise and may be observed during the exercise and determined by the evaluation team.

| Objective | PHEP Capability | RATINGS | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| P | S | M | U |
| Identify your agency’s current strengths and gaps in emergency communication and coordination | 1.2 Build community partnerships to support health preparedness |  |  |  |  |
| 4.2: Determine the need for a joint public information system |  |  |  |  |
| 6.3 Exchange information to determine a common operating picture |  |  |  |  |
| Review and list the roles, plans, and procedures related to emergency communication | 4.1: Activate the emergency public health information system |  |  |  |  |
| 4.3: Establish and participate in information system operations |  |  |  |  |
| Identify issues related to building effective communication channels between public health, health care, and the public, including vulnerable populations | 4.4: Establish avenues for public interaction and information exchange |  |  |  |  |
| 6.1 Identify stakeholders to be incorporated into information flow |  |  |  |  |
| Incorporate objectively assessed and research-validated evidence and current best practices into your agency’s PHEP communications protocols | 4.5: Issue public information, alerts, warnings, and notifications |  |  |  |  |
| 6.2: Identify and develop rules and data elements for sharing |  |  |  |  |
| **Ratings Definitions:**   * **P: Performed without Challenges**: The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. * **S: Performed with Some Challenges**: The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified. * **M: Performed with Major Challenges**: The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s), but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other activities; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. * **U: Unable to be Performed**: The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were not performed in a manner that achieved the objective(s). | | | | | |

Detailed Analysis

The following sections provide an overview of the performance related to each exercise objective and associated core capability, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement

**Objective 1**:

Identify your agency’s current strengths and gaps in emergency communication and coordination

The strengths and areas for improvement for each core capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

PHEP Capability 1.2**:** Build community partnerships to support health preparedness

Strengths

The [full or partial] capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

**PHEP Capability 4.2:** Determine the need for a joint public information system

Strengths

The [full or partial] capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

PHEP Capability 6.3: Exchange information to determine a common operating picture

Strengths

The [full or partial] capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

**Objective 2**:

Review and list the roles, plans, and procedures related to emergency communication

The strengths and areas for improvement for each core capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

PHEP Capability 4.1: Activate the emergency public health information system

Strengths

The [full or partial] capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

PHEP Capability 4.3: Establish and participate in information system operations

Strengths

The [full or partial] capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

**Objective 3**:

Identify issues related to building effective communication channels between public health, health care, and the public, including vulnerable populations

The strengths and areas for improvement for each core capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

PHEP Capability 4.4: Establish avenues for public interaction and information exchange

Strengths

The [full or partial] capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

PHEP Capability 6.1: Identify stakeholders to be incorporated into information flow

Strengths

The [full or partial] capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

**Objective 4**:

Incorporate objectively assessed and research-validated evidence and current best practices into your agency’s PHEP communications protocols

The strengths and areas for improvement for each core capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

PHEP Capability 4.5: Issue public information, alerts, warnings, and notifications

Strengths

The [full or partial] capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

PHEP Capability 6.2: Identify and develop rules and data elements for sharing

Strengths

The [full or partial] capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Appendix A: Improvement Plan

This IP has been developed specifically for [Organization or Jurisdiction] as a result of [Exercise Name] conducted on [date of exercise].

| **PHEP Capability** | **Issue/Area for Improvement** | **Corrective Action** | **Capability Element[[1]](#footnote-1)** | **Primary Responsible Organization** | **Organization POC** | **Start Date** | **Completion Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.2 Build community partnerships to support health preparedness | 1. [Area for Improvement] | [Corrective Action 1] |  |  |  |  |  |
| [Corrective Action 2] |  |  |  |  |  |
| [Corrective Action 3] |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. [Area for Improvement] | [Corrective Action 1] |  |  |  |  |  |
| [Corrective Action 2] |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.1: Activate the emergency public health information system |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.2: Determine the need for a joint public information system |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.3: Establish and participate in information system operations |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.4: Establish avenues for public interaction and information exchange |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.5: Issue public information, alerts, warnings, and notifications  6.1 Identify stakeholders to be incorporated into information flow |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6.2: Identify and develop rules and data elements for sharing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6.3 Exchange information to determine a common operating picture |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Appendix B: Exercise Participants

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| Participating Organizations |
| **Federal** |
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|  |
| **State** |
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|  |
| **[Jurisdiction A]** |
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|  |
| **[Jurisdiction B]** |
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1. Capability Elements are: Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, or Exercise. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)