

EPI Update for Friday, April 3, 2009
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Health care and public health modernization: Connecting the dots**
- **Carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacteriaceae* in acute care facilities**
- **Rabies vaccine now available for pre-exposure vaccination of foreign travelers**
- **Did you hear the one about the Bobcat that walked into the bar?**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Health care and public health modernization: Connecting the dots

Health care professionals in Iowa may have heard about our state's recent efforts to modernize its public health system. But what does this have to do with health care?

Currently, public health staff in one county may regularly provide education and consultation about disease prevention and control to their local health care community. There is no way to ensure, however, that this is being done in all Iowa's counties or if it is being done adequately at the state level.

This example comes directly from the Iowa Public Health Standards. Developed by more than 150 local and state public health practitioners, the standards describe the basic services and infrastructure that all Iowans can reasonably expect from local and state public health. As such, the standards form the backbone of the current Modernizing Public Health initiative. For more information on the standards, visit: www.idph.state.ia.us/mphi/standards.asp

Part of this initiative is the Public Health Modernization Act. If passed, the act will benefit Iowans in ways that are already being implemented by more than 20 other states. Like Iowa's Modernization initiative, their goal is voluntary accreditation of public health agencies. As public health agencies in Iowa become accredited, Iowans will begin to see a number of benefits. Among them are: an increased and improved public health service delivery; a system for quality improvement and accountability; and increased capacity for public health to respond to disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and other events that threaten the health of Iowans.

Over the coming months, the EPI Update will feature more background and updates on Iowa's efforts to modernize its public health system. Until then, please visit www.idph.state.ia.us/mphi for FAQs, fact sheets, information about similar projects in other states, and much more.

Carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacteriaceae* in acute care facilities

Infection with carbapenem –resistant *Enterobacteriaceae* (CRE) is emerging as a challenge in health care. Currently, carbapenem-resistant *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (CRKP) is the species of (CRE) most commonly encountered in the United States. CRKP is resistant to almost all available antimicrobial agents, and infections with CRKP have been associated with high rates of morbidity and mortality, particularly among persons with prolonged hospitalization, as well as those who are critically ill and exposed to invasive devices. For all acute care facilities, CDC and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC) recommend an aggressive infection control strategy, including managing all patients with CRE using contact precautions. They also recommend implementing Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI) guidelines for detection of carbapenemase production.

In areas where CRE are not known to be endemic, acute care facilities should:

- Review microbiology records for the preceding six to 12 months to determine whether CRE have been recovered at the facility.
- If the review finds previously unrecognized CRE, perform a point prevalence culture survey in high-risk units for other cases of CRE, and
- Perform active surveillance cultures of patients with epidemiologic links to persons from whom CRE have been recovered.

In areas where CRE are endemic, an increased likelihood exists for importation of CRE, thus facilities should consider additional strategies to reduce rates of CRE. More information and updated recommendations from CDC and HICPAC for the control of CRE or carbapenemase-producing *Enterobacteriaceae* in acute care (inpatient) facilities can be found at:

www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5810a4.htm

Rabies vaccine now available for pre-exposure vaccination of foreign travelers

Novartis announced this week that its vaccine is now available for pre-exposure vaccination without supply limitations. Previously, vaccine was only available for pre-exposure vaccination of those at high risk, but now foreign travelers can also receive pre-exposure vaccination.

By current ACIP recommendations, pre-exposure vaccination should be considered for persons whose activities bring them into frequent contact with rabies virus or potentially rabid animals, such as veterinarians and their staff, animal handlers, rabies researchers, and certain laboratory workers. In addition, some international travelers may be candidates for pre-exposure vaccination if

they are likely to come in contact with animals in areas where dog or other animal rabies is enzootic, and immediate access to appropriate medical care, including rabies vaccine and immune globulin, could be limited.

Vaccine for pre-exposure vaccination is not currently available from Sanofi Pasteur.

Vaccine for **post**-exposure treatment is available through both Sanofi Pasteur and Novartis.

- Sanofi-Pasteur requires that health care providers confer with state public health officials to obtain a confirmation code (that changes often) before processing vaccine orders.
- No password is required to place orders through Novartis.

Please contact IDPH at 800-362-2736 during business hours or 515-323-4360 after hours (this will connect you to the state patrol who will page the on-call staff) for rabies consultation and/or to obtain the confirmation code required by Sanofi-Pasteur to order rabies vaccine.

IDPH has added a link at the top of the Rabies page on the IDPH Web site for current information on product availability and guidelines for ordering. Please visit:

www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/cade/rabies_vaccine_ordering_instructions.pdf

Did you hear the one about the Bobcat that walked into the bar?

Last week in Cottonwood, AZ, about midnight, a bobcat walked into a local bar, ordered a beer, and attacked several people, including a bar patron who attempted to take a photo of the bobcat with his cell phone. You might think this is an April fool's joke, but it's not. The bobcat did go into the bar after several encounters with unsuspecting patrons in the parking lot. (OK, we did make up the part about him ordering a beer). For more on this story and other odd behavior from rabid animals go to

www.dcourier.com/main.asp?SectionID=1&subsectionID=1&articleID=66357

Remember, any wild animal doing abnormal things should be considered rabid until proved otherwise. The Iowa public health veterinarian recommends enjoying wildlife from afar.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

2009 Iowa Public Health Conference – *Prevent, Promote, Protect*
April 7 & 8, 2009, Scheman Conference Center, Ames, IA
For registration information, visit:

www.iowapha.org/Default.aspx?pageId=127969

We are still attempting to resolve the ? issue. Thanks for your patience.

Have a healthy and happy week!

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800-362-2736