



E103 Efforts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to Improve Fatality Management and Mortality Reporting Practices During Mass Fatality Incidents at the State and Local Levels

Rebecca S. Noe, MPH, MN, CDC, 1600 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA 30333; DeAndrea Martinez, MPH, CDC, 1600 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA 30333; Todd Talbert, MA, CDC, 1600 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA 30333; and Stephanie Dopson, ScD, CDC, 1600 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA 30333*

After attending this presentation, attendees will understand several activities undertaken by the CDC, in collaboration with the forensic science community, to improve state and local public health preparedness and response to support mass fatality incidents. Attendees will learn how these activities address known gaps in the collecting, recording, and sharing of mortality information after mass fatality incidents.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by demonstrating how strengthening fatality management, including data sharing with public health, can result in a more effective response to a mass fatality incident at the local, state, and federal levels. This presentation will describe and demonstrate the usefulness of CDC tools to address gaps and to improve the accuracy and timeliness of mortality data at different stages of a public health emergency response. Attendees can use what they learn to examine and update their existing mass fatality plans and exercises in their jurisdictions, if necessary.

Attendees will learn how these activities address known gaps in the collecting, recording, and sharing of mortality information after mass fatality incidents. Attendees will be briefed on the 2017 updates to CDC's *Public Health Preparedness Capabilities: National Standards for State and Local Planning*, specifically to the Fatality Management and Information Sharing Capabilities and any potential considerations for their mass fatality plans.¹ Other developed tools, *Reference Guide for Certification of Deaths Associated with a Disaster (in press)* and *Disaster-Related Death Scene Data Collection Forms*, will offer attendees up-to-date resources to incorporate into their mass fatality management planning.² Finally, attendees will learn about an opportunity to engage with CDC on a new project to develop a fatality management toolkit for state and local jurisdictions.

This presentation will provide a background on the CDC's Public Health Preparedness Capabilities and common gaps in local mortality data management identified by CDC. This presentation will explain the process taken to develop the tools and the purpose and content of each resource. Suggestions on how attendees can use these tools to update their plans will be highlighted using emergency events, for example, events such as tracking heat-related deaths during a heat wave or deaths attributed to a mass fatality incident from a tornadoe across several jurisdictions.

In conclusion, when planning for and responding to incidents with fatalities, it is the responsibility of local and/or state fatality management professionals (e.g., medical examiners, coroners) to ensure the respectful and orderly management of deceased persons, while tracking and sharing mortality data in a timely fashion with public health officials. These data can inform public health practitioners when developing targeted messaging during an event and for refining strategies to prevent deaths from future disaster events.

Reference(s):

1. *Public Health Preparedness Capabilities: National Standards for State and Local Planning*. CDC, accessed July 19, 2017, <https://www.cdc.gov/phpr/readiness/capabilities.htm>.
2. *Death Scene Investigation after Natural Disasters or other Weather-Related Events*. CDC, accessed July 19, 2017, <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/disaster/default.htm>.

Mass Fatality Planning, Mass Fatality Incident, Disasters