

# **Guidelines for Communication and Response to a Communicable Disease Outbreak within California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Adult Institutions**

## **A. Background**

Outbreaks\* of communicable diseases (CDs) have been well documented in correctional settings. In recent years outbreaks in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Adult Institutions have occurred due to infections with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, *Norovirus*, *Influenza*, and *Campylobacter*. To ensure prompt investigation and management of outbreaks and to prevent further transmission within the CDCR Adult Institutions (both prisons and Community Correctional Facilities) to other facilities and to the general community, rapid communication and coordination of responses between CDCR health care staff at the facility, the CDCR Public Health (PH) Unit, the local health department(s) (LHD) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Division of Communicable Disease Control (DCDC) are essential.

In order to facilitate the prompt and appropriate response to outbreaks in the CDCR adult correctional institutions (including Community Correctional Facilities) this document outlines guidelines for responding to communicable disease outbreaks. These guidelines were developed through collaborative discussions involving CDCR PH Unit, California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) and CDPH DCDC.

## **B. Communication and Response**

1. The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of the correctional facility or designee will confirm the existence of an outbreak\* or possible outbreak and identify the diagnosis or suspected diagnosis. If there are questions about a suspected outbreak, the CDCR PH Unit and the LHD should be called for consultation. To help identify the organism the CMO may ask the LHD for the assistance of their Public Health Laboratory resources. The LHD laboratory can seek assistance from the CDPH laboratories if needed (e.g., VRDL for influenza virus testing, MDL for salmonella strain typing, etc.).
2. If a communicable disease outbreak is suspected or confirmed, the CMO of the correctional facility or designee will immediately notify (by telephone call followed by FAX or email) the CMO of the CDCR PH Unit or designee and the LHD in the jurisdiction where the correctional facility is located. The CDCR Preliminary Report Of Infectious Disease and/or Outbreak Form should be used. This notification should include:
  - the name and location of the facility;
  - the diagnosis or suspected diagnosis;

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\* An outbreak is generally defined as two or more cases of the same disease that appear to be related to the same source. In some instances, such as with botulism and within the prison institutional setting, one case may be considered an outbreak and should be investigated appropriately.

- the number of cases and suspect cases;
  - the number hospitalized, if any;
  - the number of deaths, if any;
  - what control measures have been implemented;
  - any other pertinent information concerning the outbreak; and
  - any request for assistance with: 1) specimen collection and laboratory analysis, 2) outbreak investigation and management, and 3) infection control guidance or assistance.
3. The CMO of the correctional facility, with the advice and guidance of the local CDCR Public Health Nurse, the CDCR PH Unit, and the LHD, will be responsible for management and control of the outbreak and will implement initial control and prevention measures. The CMO of the CDCR PH Unit or designee will at all times keep the California Prison Health Care Receiver or designee and the Medical Director in the Clinical Operations Branch of the CDCR Division of Correctional Health Care Services informed of the outbreak.
  4. Both the affected LHD and the CMO of the CDCR PH Unit or designee will notify the CDPH Division of Communicable Disease Control (DCDC) or the appropriate Branch within DCDC of the outbreak. Information to be communicated is the same as that listed in section B.2 above.
  5. To facilitate communication, periodic or regularly scheduled conference calls should be arranged to include all responding and supporting agencies and facilities.

**C. Support for Outbreak Management and Control (e.g., epidemiologic)**

1. When the staffing or resources needed to effectively manage and control an outbreak is beyond that available within CDCR, the CMO of the correctional facility or designee, with the advice and guidance of the CMO of the CDCR PH Unit or designee will request support from the LHD.
2. If the LHD is unable to provide support, the LHD will contact the CDPH DCDC or the appropriate Branch within DCDC regarding the request for support. If the only support needed is assistance with specimen collection or laboratory testing then the LHD should first contact their local PH laboratory. If the local PH laboratory needs assistance then either the LHD or the local PH laboratory can contact the appropriate CDPH laboratory directly for assistance.
3. The CDCR PH Unit will provide LHD and CDPH staff a simplified and rapid process to provide clearance and access for staff to enter correctional facility grounds to assist with investigations of communicable diseases and outbreaks.
4. The CMO of the correctional facility or designee, upon request, will ensure basic prison safety training is made available to LHD and CDPH staff who must access the prison grounds or otherwise interact with inmates.

5. The CMO of the correctional facility and the CMO of the CDCR PH Unit or designee will be kept informed and involved on all developments, findings and recommendations resulting from LHD and/or CDPH support.

#### **D. Outbreak Summary and Report**

1. The CMO of the correctional facility or the CDCR PH Unit, or a CDCR designee, with input from LHD and CDPH, will write a brief summary of findings and recommendations. The report should include any remedial plan to prevent future outbreaks. This summary will be sent to the affected correctional facilities, CDCR Headquarters, the involved LHDs, and CDPH DCDC.
2. The LHD in the jurisdiction where the outbreak occurred will review the outbreak summary and will ensure it is filed with CDPH DCDC.

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#### Abbreviations Used in this Document

CCLHO	California Conference of Local Health Officers
CDCR	California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
CDPH	California Department of Public Health
CMO	Chief Medical Officer
DCDC	Division of Communicable Disease Control
LHD	local health department
MDL	Microbial Disease Laboratory
PH Unit	Public Health Unit
VRDL	Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory