



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Pursuing a Joint Strategy: Public Health-Law Enforcement



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2007

# Objectives of Presentation

- To be able to define the goals of public health and law enforcement during an event
- To be able to describe key elements for planning, prevention and response
- To be able to describe approaches for information sharing during an event



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Outline

- Law Enforcement and Public Health Goals
- Key Elements to achieving goals
  - Securing dangerous pathogens
  - Establishing information sharing protocols and procedures related to:
    - Threat Assessments
    - Investigations
    - Interviews
  - Training



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Goals: Law Enforcement and Public Health

## Law enforcement:

- Protect health and safety of public
- Prevent bioterrorism attacks
- Stop further crimes
- Apprehend and convict criminals

## Public health:

- Protect health and safety of public
- Prevent disease outbreaks
- Stop further cases of disease and outbreaks
- Build science base for future prevention



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Goals: Law Enforcement and Public Health

- Goals are mutually beneficial
- Key elements to achieving these goals:
  1. Secure dangerous pathogens
  2. Establish information sharing protocols and procedures related to:
    - a. Conducting a Threat Assessment
    - b. Initiating an Investigation
    - c. Conducting Interviews
  3. Training



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# 1. Securing Dangerous Pathogens

- Potential biological agent sources:
  - Endemic disease outbreaks/sources
  - **Laboratories possessing high consequence biological agents (research/clinical)**
  - Synthetic Biology, an emerging threat





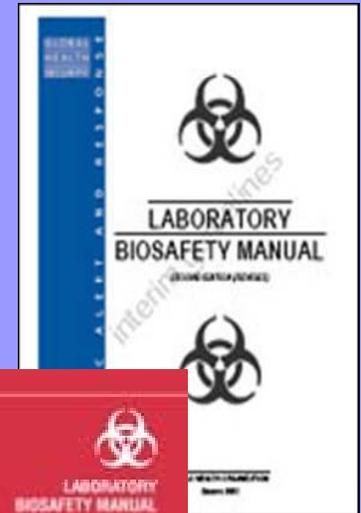
I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Securing Dangerous Pathogens

- Laboratory biosecurity supports the laboratory biosafety agenda of preventing disease in people, animals, and plants
- Safe and secure laboratories help
  - Ensure the containment of hazardous infectious substances
  - Protect valuable research and commercial assets
  - Minimize risk of accidental exposure or release
  - **Reduce the risk of crime and bioterrorism**





I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Securing Dangerous Pathogens: Biosecurity/Biosafety

## ■ Law Enforcement:

Minimize security risk (material theft, diversion, malicious use of pathogen)

- Conduct background investigations of personnel who access pathogens
- Conduct security risk assessments of laboratory facilities to ensure adequate controls are in place
- Establish notification procedures so that any suspicious activity and theft, loss, or release of pathogens are reported

## ■ Public Health/Laboratory:

Minimize safety risks to laboratory personnel and surrounding environment

- Establish guidelines and safety criteria and conduct training
- Report/follow up on possible lab exposures or any theft, loss, or release of pathogen



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

## 2. Establish Information Sharing Protocols and Procedures

Types of information/sources

### Law Enforcement

#### Intel:

- Terror groups/organizations
- Threats
- Intelligence
- Victim information



### Public Health Intel:

- Disease clusters/outbreaks
- Lab test results
- Epidemiological investigation
- Patient information



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Information Sharing Protocols and Procedures

- Establish communication mechanism *before* the event
  - Public health and law enforcement don't typically work together
  - Work out procedures in advance
  - Helps build credibility and trust
  - Challenges:
    - Goals may overlap but methods are different
    - Privacy of patient information
    - Sensitive law enforcement investigative info



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Information Sharing Protocols and Procedures

*A critical first step to developing protocols is to create a list of Public Health and Law Enforcement triggers that would signal the need for initial communication*



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Public Health Triggers

(examples)

- Test samples submitted to labs that are positive for bioterrorism agents
- Unusually large numbers of patients with similar symptoms or disease
- Unusually large numbers of unexplained symptoms, diseases, or death
- Higher than expected morbidity and mortality associated with common disease
- Disease with unusual geographic or seasonal distribution
- Ill persons presenting at the same time; point source with compressed epidemic curve



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Law Enforcement Triggers

- Intelligence or investigative information indicating individual or group is unlawfully possessing a biological agent
- Seizure of bio-processing equipment
- Seizure of a biological dissemination device
- Assessments or threats that indicate a credible biological threat
- A Hazardous Materials Team response which involves biological agents (white powder letter, etc)



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

## 2a. Conducting a Threat Assessment

- Purpose of Threat Assessment
  - To determine if a credible bioterrorism threat exists
  - To identify next steps to address threat if one exists
- Procedures for Conducting a Threat Assessment
  - Should be defined
  - Advantages of joint assessment
    - Each entity may have critical information that will affect decisions
    - Should be done when either agency meets the defined triggers

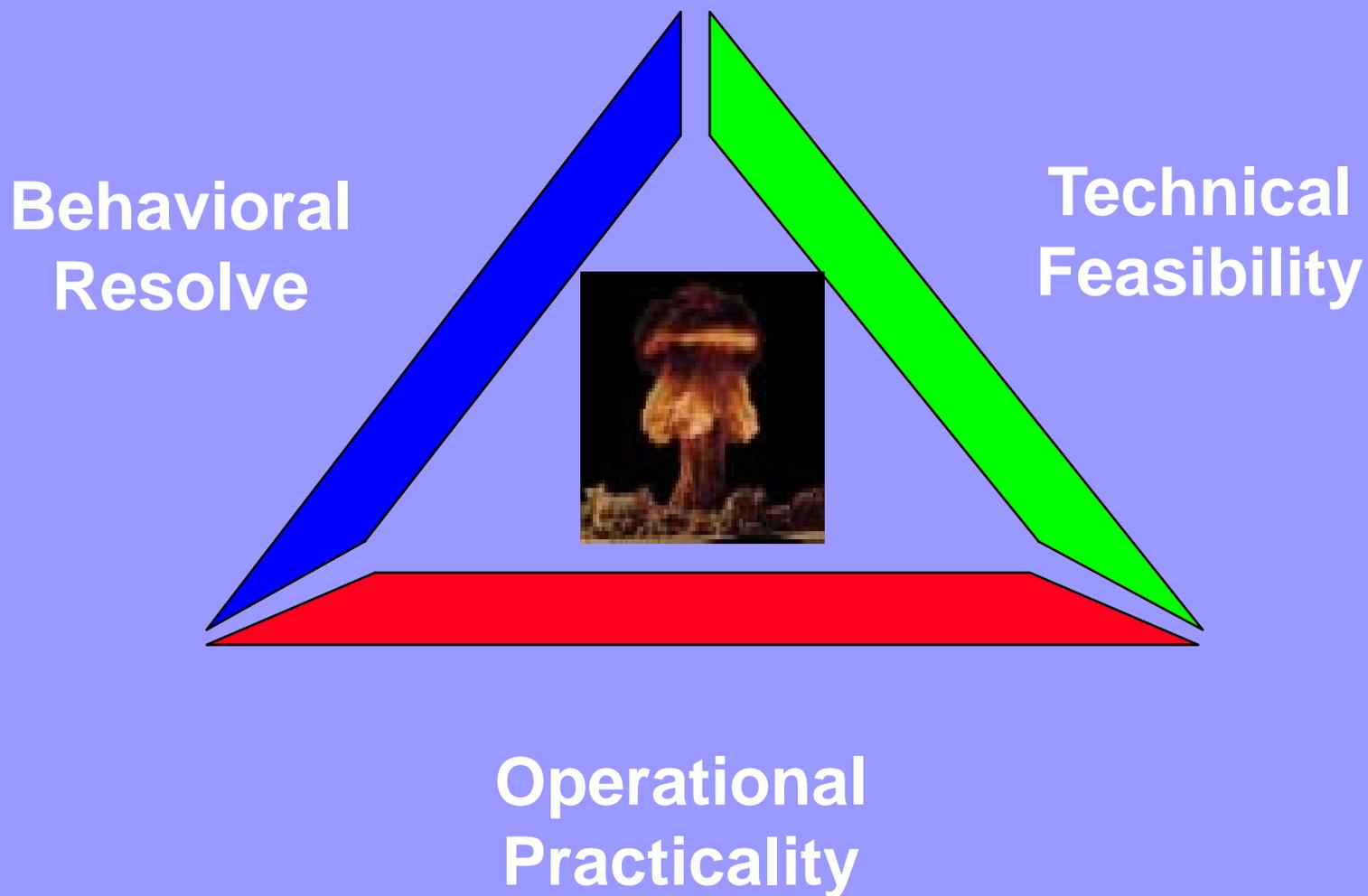


I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2007

# WMD Threat Assessment





I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Conducting a Threat Assessment

- Law Enforcement and Public Health have unique data sources/abilities to assist in assessment
- If threat is determined to be credible
  - Law Enforcement agrees to next steps
  - Public Health agrees to next steps
  - Consider initiating a Joint Investigation



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

## 2b. Initiating an Investigation

- Must have pre-defined policies for sharing information
- Policy should be implemented through pre-determined practices and procedures that address methodologies and potential issues



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Joint Investigation: Benefits

## To Law Enforcement

- Access to infectious disease subject matter experts
- Access to relevant medical/health information
- Combines two interviews into one

## To Public Health

- Access to case information (i.e. location of release, dispersal device used, targeted victims)
- Assisting apprehension of suspect, therefore prevent future exposure



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Guidelines for Initiating a Joint Investigation

- Law Enforcement and Public Health agencies should agree on criteria for joint investigation
  - This may also include joint interviews
- Must take into consideration National, Regional, State and local laws
  - Privacy rules (patient confidentiality)
  - Criminal prosecution



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Triggers for Initiating a Joint Investigation

- Certified laboratory tests are positive for an agent
  - Natural exposure is unlikely
  - No known risk factors for disease occurrence
  - Law Enforcement intelligence or information suggest bioterrorism tie
- AND
- All facts presented lead public health officials to a reasonable medical belief based on the disease and surrounding circumstances that it was intentionally caused



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

## 2c. Conducting Interviews





I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Interviews

- Purpose- To determine:
  - Whether the illness or event is consistent with a particular agent
  - When an exposure might have occurred
  - Where an exposure could have occurred
  - How any exposure occurred
  - Whether the individual is a victim of a crime or the perpetrator of a crime
- Requires: Skills in criminal investigation and skills in disease investigation



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Interview

- Public Health gathers two types of data
  - Personal medical information (e.g. information about current illness, medical history, laboratory and other test findings (i.e. radiographic reports)
    - Often gathered prior to the interview starting!
    - This info will not normally be shared
  - Patient demographics, risk factors and other epidemiological data (e.g. age, ethnicity, occupation, travel history, attendance at large events, contact history)
    - This information may be shared
- Law Enforcement
  - Receive any threats?
  - What has patient been doing (travel, work, etc.)?
  - Who has the patient been in contact with?



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Advantages of Joint Interviews

- Both agencies can make use of all pertinent information that may help them accomplish their respective goals
- Minimizes disruption/stress to patient by reducing number of interviews conducted
- If interviews are conducted separately, law enforcement or public health may not understand relevance of collected information to the other agency
- Combines technical expertise of Public Health with Law Enforcement



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Considerations

- Patient medical needs take priority over the interview (patient might be very ill)
  - Joint interview team should be sensitive to patient's concerns and needs
- Patient's criminal record
  - Possible connections to terrorism and/or the disease outbreak should take priority over known lesser crimes (illegal drug history, alien status, etc.)



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Joint Interview: Planning Considerations

- Which agency leads the interview, if any?
- Procedures to exchange initial information between Law Enforcement and Public Health (prior to interview!)
  - PPE, meeting location, disease facts, criminal background of patient
- How sensitive medical or law enforcement information will be protected
- What information should be gathered during the interview



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2007

## 3. Training

### Create Joint Training Programs

- Notification drills
- Table Top Exercises
  - Identify local leaders in public health, medicine, and law enforcement
  - Develop locally adaptable strategies
- Full Scale and Practical Exercises
  - Involve local responders, hazardous materials specialists, and personnel above in overt and covert responses to bioterrorism attacks
  - Involve hospital personnel, mock victims/patients



I  
N  
T  
E  
R  
P  
O  
L



2009

# Summary

- Law Enforcement and Public Health share many mutual goals and objectives
- Both Public Health and Law Enforcement gather information that is critical to an investigation of a bioterrorist event
- Developing pre-planned protocols and procedures for sharing of information should improve the outcome of the investigation
- Drills and exercises provide an opportunity to test protocols and procedures and can lead to improvements in response during a real event