

SPH Center Spotlight



USA Center for Rural Public Health Preparedness

Vision

The vision of the USA Center is to be the premier resource to advance preparedness capabilities of those tasked with protecting the public's health in rural America.

About the Center:

Established: July 2007

Number of SPH Investigators: 6

Funded by: Grants and Contracts

Leadership Team: Barbara Quiram, PhD, Director

Kay Carpender, Assistant Director

Brandy Sebesta, Program Coordinator

Jennifer Meier, MPH, Research Assistant

Ashley Ofori, MPH, Research Assistant

Mercedes Duchicela, MPH, Senior Program Coordinator

Mission

The mission of the USA Center is to work with both internal and external partners to promote the development of knowledge, skills, and capacity supporting emergency preparedness planning, response, mitigation, and recovery in communities throughout the country, with emphasis on the rural and underserved.

Goals and Objectives

The Texas A&M School of Public Health is committed to transforming health through interdisciplinary inquiry, innovative solutions, and the development of leaders to engage diverse communities worldwide.

Each of the USA Center goals and objectives align with this commitment by working closely with and within academia and practice to build a stronger, more resilient community at large

Future Directions

The USA Center is self-supporting, while meeting all stated goals and objectives. Center leadership is continuously searching out new and innovative funding sources, as well as expanding the scope of the enterprise. Funding has traditionally come from training program registration fees, cooperative agreements with CDC preparedness programs, and contracts with state partners. More recently, the Center has begun to partner with other School of Public Health faculty to provide opportunities for evaluation and research and sought out external partnerships to grow our research capacity. A current example of this is development and submission of an NIH R-21 research proposal to examine social networks addressing emergency response to functional needs post Hurricane Harvey. The USA Center leadership is working through multiple channels to create synergy among the Centers within the Texas A&M system.

Select Key Projects

- Provide technical assistance to Sioux tribal nations in South Dakota to build public health emergency preparedness capability.
- Collaborate with the Texas Department of State Health Services Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Section to exercise state and regional jurisdiction on response to emerging infectious diseases, such as Ebola.
- Create trainings for the broader public health workforce, including Community Health Workers, and maintain an online continuing education learning management system.
- Online Preparedness Training for target audiences, including justices of the peace, medical certifiers, funeral home directors, local health departments and emergency management coordinators.

Center Focus Areas

- *Community Engagement*
- *Technical Assistance*
- *Education & Training*
- *Assessments*
- *Consulting*
- *Exercises*
- *Educational Material Development*



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