

KALHD/KDHE PHEP Advisory Team

Meeting Minutes

11-30-2021

Attendees

Dennis Kriesel, KALHD

Tom Langer

Cindy Mullen

Jennifer Kraft

Dana Rickley

Betha Elliott

Denise Kelly

Lisa Beebe

Nancy Griffith

Rebecca Adamson

Tamara Wilkerson

Shelby Ostrom, KALHD

Meeting Start

Dennis called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

BP4 Workplan Discussion

Jennifer started the discussion and asked for feedback from the group about the exercises for 2022 and preparedness. The traditional method is having a training, exercise, and developing a plan.

Tom mentioned that specific exercises and structure is very helpful, more structure instead of flexibility. Tom also discussed turnover and lots of new public health administrators. Potential to go back a few steps to help develop PHEP plans and training for new administrators. Jennifer suggested to focus on pandemic influenzas and infectious diseases.

Cindy mentioned that the annex list has not been updated for a while from KDHE; lots of basics that need attention. Jennifer mentioned that they will be doing back to basics, but there does need to be an exercise every year. Jennifer also talked about a fiscal and administrative exercise on a state level, and Tom mentioned that the local level would appreciate the process of how to declare emergencies and what to do. (i.e., tornadoes, ice storms, etc.)

Jennifer discussed the impact of doing an exercise with counties and emergency managers, particularly because the exercise would be specific to each county. Tom said that commissioners and county officials respond better in a “game” structured setting, so finding ways to engage will be important. Re-building capacity that public health has lost, and exercises should reflect this.

Dennis asked Jennifer if the CDC is on board with going back to basics, and if there is anything they need about turnover rates in public health. Jennifer said there wasn’t an issue, and this is very important. However, it is difficult to have all the health departments doing different exercises. Cindy asked if there would be a team that could develop a template, potentially done at the regional coordinator meeting, that counties could use to develop the exercises. Betha suggested to do multiple exercises in different parts of the region. They tend to get multiple players if people get something out of it. Jennifer mentioned that healthcare coalitions will be doing radiation for their exercise this year.

Jennifer will be taking these ideas back to the training coordinators and will be using it as a workshop rather than a “tabletop” exercise. Jennifer said that she is hopeful to get a head start on BP5 early and have all plans ready a year in advance. Dana echoed Tom that phone book updates are critical and where to find the book, too.

Recap of PHEP Topic at KAC Annual Conference

Dennis did a recap of the PHEP topics at the KAC annual conference. This workshop is typically a main session of the conference to get in front of commissioners. The session was about emergency preparedness in COVID-19. The session had good attendance and lots of questions on local response from commissioners. Overall, the session went very well.

Denise asked about the questions that were asked during the session. Dennis said that most questions were about COVID-19 including masks, schools, mandates, and quarantines. The PHEP session was less aggressive than the other public health session. There were no major negative questions about public health, which is good.

Cindy asked if there was an attendance percentage from the meeting, particularly from western Kansas commissioners. Dennis said that there is a potential to get the attendees, but he doesn’t know off the top of his head. However, KALHD typically hosts a PHEP webinar with KAC each year and the presentation went well. Dennis is going to be aiming to do a webinar for BP3 sometime soon. Cindy wondered if this webinar could be required for commissioners because they have a hard time with attendance, and it’s been frustrating.

Tom mentioned that the next step for a lot of health departments will be recovery, including image recovery. Particularly with threats and perceptions of outside individuals. A strategy for recovery and repair is important. Dennis mentioned the idea of a public health summit for commissioners that removes barriers for commissioners.

Other

Denise mentioned that the PHEP funding will come sometime in January and KDHE will be prepared to present around that time. Next meeting will be in early February 2022. The committee will review the workplan and present it to the KALHD board of directors.

Adjournment

Dennis adjourned the meeting at 11:32 am.