

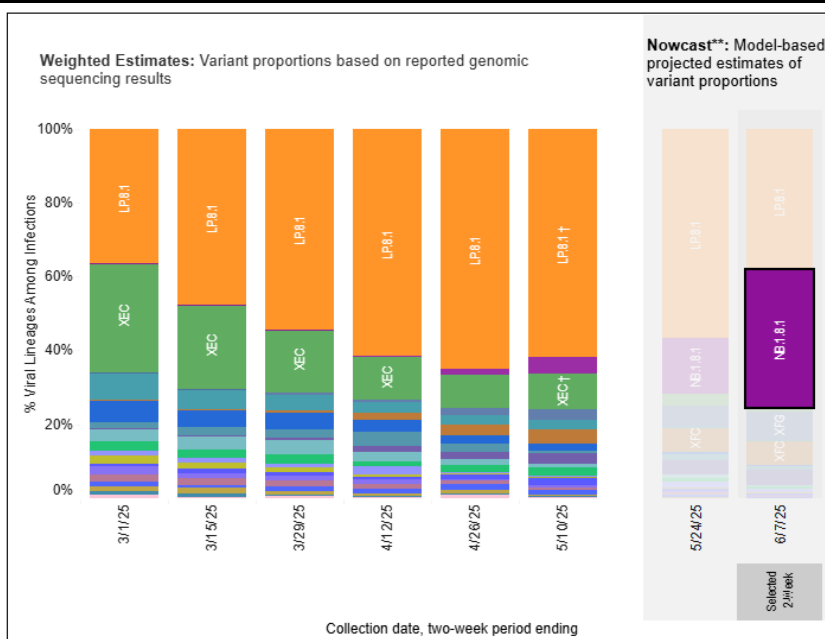
Thursday, June 26, 2025

June Region 2 RESPTC Newsletter

REGION 2 RESPTC PARTNER COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

The Region 2 RESPTC at NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue serves as a National Special Pathogen System (NSPS) Level 1 facility and leads special pathogen preparedness efforts for New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more about RESPTC updates, resources, and partner events [here](#).

OUTBREAK AND SPECIAL PATHOGEN NEWS



[CDC](#) visualization of COVID-19 variants.

NB.1.8.1 COVID-19 VARIANT

The NB.1.8.1 COVID-19 variant, informally known as "Nimbus," has been rapidly spreading. As of early June, it is estimated to account for [37% of COVID-19](#) cases between May 25 and June 7, up from only 2% in late April. This variant is characterized by a particularly severe sore throat, described by sufferers as a sensation similar to swallowing shattered glass. Despite its rapid spread and

distinctive symptoms, the [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control \(ECDC\)](#) notes that the new variant does not pose a greater risk than other Omicron variants. For the latest variant data, you can refer to the [CDC's COVID Data Tracker](#) and the [New York City Department of Health's](#) COVID-19 data dashboard.

2025-2026 COVID-19 VACCINE FORMULA

In May, the [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) released a recommendation that the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine formula for use beginning in Fall 2025 use a monovalent JN.1-lineage vaccine composition and advised vaccine manufacturers to more closely match currently circulating SARS-CoV-2 viruses.

CLADE I MPOX

The [Massachusetts Department of Health](#) announced a travel-associated case of Clade I MPXV (monkeypox virus) on June 17th. As of May 2025, the World Health Organization (WHO) reports that clade I [mpox continues to circulate](#) in several countries across Central and Eastern Africa, with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda, and Burundi being the most affected. Sporadic travel-associated cases have been detected outside Africa, [including five in the United States since November 2024](#).

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

Free Secret Shopper Exercises for your Facilities

The Region 2 RESPTC is working to provide free secret shopper exercises, complete with an After-Action Report, to gauge facilities' preparedness to Identify, Isolate, and Inform at points of entry. The results of these exercises will be provided to your facility to help you better prepare for a special pathogen patient presenting to your site. The information obtained during these exercises will remain private to your facility with the generated reports and assessment tools meant to help assess your own readiness and meet regulatory requirements. If you are interested in applying for this free offering, please fill out our [interest form](#).

June Travel Screening Country List

The New York City Health + Hospitals Travel Screening List reviews current special pathogen disease outbreaks that require prompt identification, isolation and/or specialized evaluation and management. This list, which may be found [here](#), can serve as a resource while screening patients.

Current Infectious Disease Outbreaks for New York City Providers

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC DOHMH) offers a list of current infectious disease outbreaks as a resource for healthcare providers in New York City. Find the resource [here](#).

CDC Be Ready for Measles Toolkit

The CDC released a Be Ready for Measles Toolkit in June that includes fact sheets, social media graphics, and videos for the public, as well as outbreak-related response tools for clinicians and other public health professionals. Find the resource [here](#).

NEW! BEACON WEEKLY DIGEST

The Biothreats Emergence, Analysis and Communications Network (BEACON) digest highlights the latest events and signals submitted to the BEACON platform—a global system for tracking and analyzing emerging biological threats. Stay informed with real-time updates from around the world, curated to help you monitor developments affecting human, animal, and environmental health. Subscribe [here](#).

REGION 2 NEWS

R2RESPTC AT THE ANNUAL ASSOCIATION FOR PROFESSIONALS IN INFECTION CONTROL AND EPIDEMIOLOGY (APIC) CONFERENCE



Priya Dhagat presenting on Infection, Prevention, and Control Simulation Examples.

Priya Dhagat and Trish Tennill represented the Region 2 RESPTC at APIC 2025. Trish presented on how to meet the new Joint Commissions standards and boost readiness for high-consequence infectious diseases.



Trish Tennill (second from the right) with other colleagues from HHS Region 2, including Michelle Pedrani from Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (far right).

PEDIATRIC CALL-DOWN DRILL MANUSCRIPT

Anthony Lo Piccolo, Patricia Ann Tennill, Jory Guttman, Logi Rajagopalan, and Vikramjit Mukherjee published a [manuscript](#) in the Journal of Emergency Management (JEM) describing a no-notice drill simulating the arrival of a pediatric patient with suspected viral hemorrhagic fever to assess the readiness of its Special Pathogen Unit. The drill highlighted the importance of exercising special pathogen preparedness protocols and demonstrated a cost-effective approach to conducting these drills while gaining valuable insights that improve our preparedness efforts and response capabilities.

OUTBREAK ADVISORIES AND RESOURCES

H5N1

Providers should consider the possibility of H5N1 in patients who had contact with potentially infected sick or dead animals in the past week and show the following symptoms:

- fever,
- cough,
- sore throat,
- body aches,
- headaches,
- fatigue,
- eye redness (or conjunctivitis), and/or
- shortness of breath

Source: [CDC](#)

Providers should report any non-sub typeable influenza A cases to their Department of Health.

Resources

- [Region 2 RESPTC H5N1 Avian Influenza Webinar Recording](#)
- CDC HAN | [Accelerated Subtyping of Influenza A in Hospitalized Patients](#)
- [NETEC Influenza A Resource Repository](#)
- [NETEC Webinar Series \(8/14/2024\): H5N1 Town Hall: Updates for Frontline Staff](#)
- NETEC [Laboratory Resources: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza \(HPAI\)](#)
- CDC [Bird Flu News and Spotlights](#)

New York State Reporting

To report sick or dead poultry in New York State, call the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets at 518-457-3502.

WHAT'S NEW ON THE REGION 2 RESPTC WEBSITE?

The Region 2 RESPTC website is a one-stop shop for all things related to special pathogen preparedness and response in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The team has updated the [Tools and Resource page](#) with new resources including the latest Travel Screening List and resources dedicated to the H5N1 response. You can also read or re-read past newsletter issues [here](#).

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