

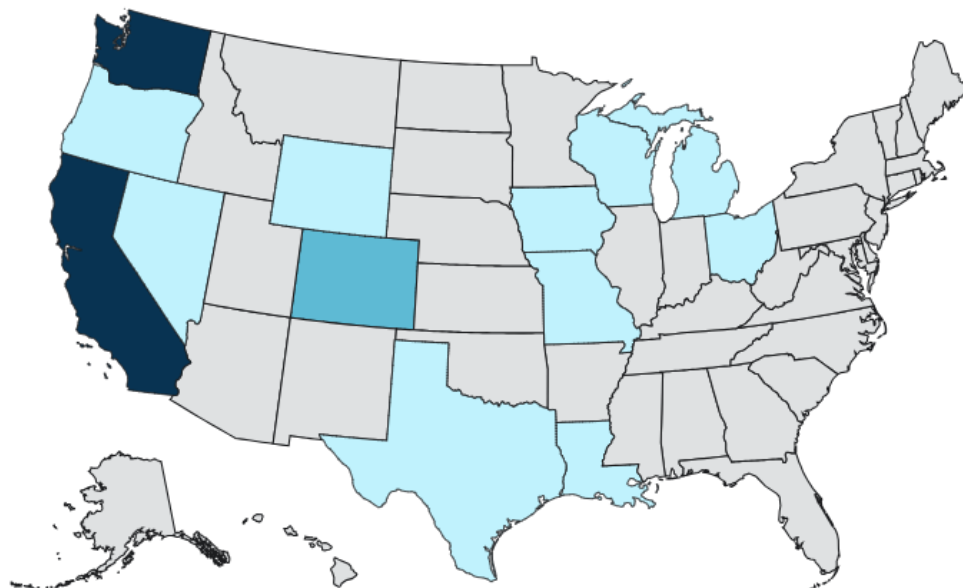
Thursday, March 27, 2025

March 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](#).

SPECIAL PATHOGEN NEWS



Total cases



CDC Situation Summary of human bird flu cases since 2024. Source: [H5 Bird Flu: Current Situation](#) | [Bird Flu](#) | [CDC](#)

H5N1 Avian Influenza

70 [human](#) cases of H5N1 Avian Influenza have been reported in the U.S. since early 2024. No new human cases have been reported since our February newsletter. The current public health risk remains low and the situation is being closely monitored. Review the recent CDC HAN [here](#).

Sudan Ebolavirus in Uganda

As of March 5th, 14 cases of Sudan virus disease (SVD) have been reported in Uganda since the start of their outbreak in January. The [CDC](#) assessed the risk posed to the United States general population as low. Review the WHO DON [here](#).

Marburg Virus Disease in Tanzania

Tanzania declared the end of their Marburg virus disease (MVD) outbreak on March 13th. No new cases have been reported since the last person confirmed with MVD in Tanzania died on January 28th. Review the WHO DON [here](#).

Hantavirus Death in New Mexico

In March, Gene Hackman's wife died from [Hantavirus](#) pulmonary syndrome (HPS). Hantavirus, which is spread through contact with rodents, can cause two syndromes – HPS and hemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome (HFRS). HPS is the most common hantavirus in the United States.

REGION 2 NEWS

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHTS & UPCOMING EVENTS



Participants at a 2023 in-person special pathogen skills training at Bellevue.

National Special Pathogen System Laboratory Training

Join the Region 2 Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Center (RESPTC) at NYC Health + Hospitals / Bellevue and the National Emerging Special Pathogens Training and Education Center (NETEC) for a special pathogen skills training designed for laboratory technicians and directors. The training will include a hybrid course in the morning with didactic content followed by a hands-on training for in-person attendees in the afternoon.

Hybrid Morning Course

Time: 9:30-12:00 pm Eastern Time

Location: Webex (virtual attendees) or Bellevue Hospital (in-person attendees)

Content:

- National Special Pathogen System (NSPS) Overview
- Packaging and Shipping
- Diagnostic Testing
- Waste Management

In-Person Training

Time: 9:30 - 4:00 pm Eastern Time

Location: Bellevue Hospital

Content:

- PPE Donning and Doffing
- Waste Handling
- Lab-specific special pathogen skills (e.g., opening tubes)
- Spill Management

Virtual trainees can register [here](#) before April 11th. In-person trainees can register [here](#) before March 30th.

March 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](#).

New Jersey Measles Exposure Guidance

The New Jersey DOH released measles exposure guidance, including on vaccination and quarantine measures. Find the resource [here](#).

New York Measles Activity Health Advisory

The New York State DOH and NYC DOHMH released a health advisory on measles on February 26th. Per this guidance, clinicians should “be alert for patients who have febrile rash illness and symptoms consistent with measles (e.g., cough, coryza, or conjunctivitis) particularly if the timing of symptoms is consistent with measles and they have recently traveled to areas with ongoing measles outbreaks.”

New York providers should report suspected measles cases to the patient’s local health department. If in New York City, suspected cases should be reported to NYC DOHMH at 866-692-3641.

Read the full advisory [here](#).

NETEC Annual Report

The National Emerging Special Pathogens Training and Education Center (NETEC) is proud to present the FY2024 annual report, underscoring our pivotal role in safeguarding America’s health security. As the nation’s leading authority in special pathogen preparedness and response, NETEC remains at the forefront of ensuring the resilience of our public health infrastructure and protecting the health of every American.

Read the full report [here](#).

NYSDOH Office of Health Emergency Preparedness (OHEP) Webinar

NYSDOH OHEP and the Region 2 RESPTC are partnering for a webinar on the National Special Pathogen System, the Region 2 high-consequence infectious disease patient transport concept of operations, and identify/isolate/inform practices.

Date/Time: April 8th from 1:00-2:00pm

Register [here](#).

New York Viral Hemorrhagic Fever (VHF) Advisory

On March 6th, the NYSDOH and NYCDOHMH released a health advisory for possible VHF, such as Ebola and Lassa virus disease. Read the advisory [here](#).

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.

Sudan Ebola Virus

14 cases of Sudan virus disease (SVD) have been reported in Uganda since the start of their outbreak in January. Symptoms usually appear 8-10 days after exposure and can include:

- fever,
- vomiting,
- diarrhea,
- rash, and
- severe bleeding.

Source: [CDC](#)

Resources

- [NETEC Ebola resource library](#)
- [CDC Qualitative Assessment](#)

PARTNER COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT | AESHA O. RIVERS



Aesha O. Rivers is a distinguished emergency management and public health preparedness leader serving as the Acting Director of Public Health Preparedness at the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Health. Based in Christiansted, she oversees a 9-person division critical to territorial emergency response and manages \$4.8 million in federal budgets dedicated to strengthening public health infrastructure and emergency capabilities.

Ms. Rivers' exceptional expertise in healthcare emergency management is a product of her unique blend of military and civilian experiences. Her interest in healthcare preparedness was sparked during her military service, where she recognized the critical intersection between emergency response and public health outcomes during crises.

As Commander of the Virgin Islands National Guard 23rd Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team (2012-2015), she led a specialized 21-person joint Army and Air Force unit designed to respond to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents. This role, where she managed \$15 million in specialized equipment, provided invaluable experience in special pathogen preparedness and multi-agency coordination during potential health crises.



In her current role, Ms. Rivers sees her primary responsibility in healthcare emergency preparedness as building resilient systems that can effectively respond to anticipated and unforeseen public health emergencies. She is dedicated to ensuring that healthcare facilities throughout the territory maintain operational continuity during disasters while protecting both patients and providers. Her work in special pathogen preparedness focuses on developing and implementing protocols for rapid identification, isolation, and treatment of infectious disease cases while minimizing community spread.

Ms. Rivers has been instrumental in coordinating COVID-19 response efforts throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands, showcasing her ability to apply emergency management principles to evolving public health challenges. Her work includes strengthening regional partnerships for emergency resource sharing and developing innovative training programs that prepare healthcare workers for special pathogen scenarios.



Her civilian career includes key positions at the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency and Department of Health, where she has developed comprehensive emergency response plans, coordinated multi-agency operations, and implemented public health preparedness programs that address the unique geographical and resource challenges of island territories.

Ms. Rivers holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Eastern Illinois University with a minor in Military Science. She is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Public Health, demonstrating her commitment to continuous learning and further enhancing her expertise in health emergency management. Her professional

credentials include numerous certifications in emergency management, incident command, and HAZMAT operations.

Her military service has been recognized with decorations, including the Meritorious Service Medal and Air Force Commendation Medal. She maintains lifetime membership in several National Guard associations, reflecting her unwavering commitment to emergency preparedness and public service.

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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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