

April Region 2 RESPTC Newsletter

REGION 2 RESPTC PARTNER COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Welcome back, thank you for reading the Region 2 Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Center (RESPTC) Partner Community Newsletter, and happy **National Minority Health Month!** National Minority Health Month is a time to raise awareness about the importance of improving the health of racial and ethnic minority communities and reducing health disparities. The 2024 National Minority Health Month theme is *Improving Health Outcomes Through Our Cultures, Communities, and Connections*. The diverse voices and backgrounds we have across New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands help shape the robust, unique community we have built within Region 2. April and beyond, we look forward to continuing to improve our community through connection and feedback. Learn more about the national holiday [here](#).

RECENT NEWS – H5N1 Outbreak

With the recent outbreaks of avian influenza virus A (H5N1 or HPAI) in 33 herds in eight states including South Dakota, Texas, Kansas, Michigan, Idaho, New Mexico, and Ohio, the Region 2 RESPTC team put together the below information for our community. To date, two people in the United States have tested positive for H5N1, one in 2022 and one 2024, both with mild symptoms (conjunctivitis) and have since recovered. Overall, the CDC's risk assessment for the general public remains low. As a precaution, clinicians should consider the possibility of H5N1 virus infection in persons showing signs or symptoms of acute respiratory illness who have relevant exposure history (e.g. people exposed to birds or other animals with confirmed or suspected H5N1).

Clinicians should consider H5N1 in a patient with influenza or influenza-like illness (ILI) and any of the following exposures in the past 10 days:

- Close contact with potentially infected sick or dead wild or commercial birds or animals
- Direct contact with water or surfaces contaminated by potentially infected sick or dead wild or commercial birds or animals
- Handled or consumed undercooked animals or unpasteurized milk and dairy products

For additional information, please see the [CDC Current Situation Summary](#), [CDC Health Advisory](#), [CDC Information for Health Professionals and Laboratories](#), [UNOFFICIAL HPAI H5N1 Map](#), and [HPAI H5N1 Clinician Fact Sheet](#).

WHAT'S NEW ON THE REGION 2 RESPTC WEBSITE?

The Region 2 RESPTC website is a one-stop shop of 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 site with the [April Travel Screening List](#), includes our new [Core Advisory Group](#), and a repository of past [newsletters](#).

APRIL HIGHLIGHTS

Region 2 Joint Commission Standards Webinar

Our Region 2 RESPTC team hosted a region-specific Joint Commission Standards webinar for our Partner Community on April 23rd. This webinar provided our community a platform to ask questions and learn more about the standards from a panel of Region 2 experts. If you missed the webinar or wanted to watch it again, please visit the [Region 2 website](#).

National Public Health Week

April 1-7 was National Public Health Week. This year's theme was "Protecting, Connecting and Thriving: We Are All Public Health" with daily themes ranging from "Future of Public Health" to "Emergency Preparedness." From the NYC Department of Health, public health is defined as "the health of populations as a whole. As a practice, public health protects and promotes the health of groups of people, from small communities to entire countries." To learn more about this event and the available resources, visit the [National Public Health Week website](#).

APRIL COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT | MATTHEW WILEY

Matthew "Matt" Wiley has a dual role within the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), serving as both the Emergency Preparedness and Response Section Chief for the Bureau of EMS and Trauma Systems and the Emergency Preparedness Manager for the Office of Primary Care and Health Systems Management and the Office of Aging and Long-Term Care. Matt coordinates emergency preparedness, exercise and response activities for regulated healthcare facilities including hospitals, nursing homes and adult care facilities, specifically focusing on facility and system level emergencies due to natural or manmade incidents. Matt also leads the development and implementation of critical data applications and data analysis for emergency preparedness and response, as well as overseeing and managing the development of training and presentation programs, and the development of key guidance documents.

A current NYS Advanced EMT, Matt has almost 20 years of emergency management experience, starting his career in volunteer EMS, holding roles of Treasurer, Lieutenant and Advanced Life Support Coordinator. Matt holds a Master's in Public Administration in Homeland Security and a Certificate in Emergency Management from SUNY Albany.

LOOKING AHEAD

May Holidays

May 5th – Hand Hygiene Day

The 2024 theme is "Promoting knowledge and capacity building of health and care workers through innovative and impactful training and education, on infection prevention and control, including hand hygiene." We encourage our community to raise awareness on the continued importance of hand hygiene on May 5th and every day. To learn more about the holiday, visit the World Health Organization (WHO) event website [here](#).

May 6 - 12th – National Nurses Week

Recognize and celebrate your organization's nurses during this year's National Nurses Week! Our nurses provide expert care and support patient safety; we thank them for their invaluable contributions. Don't forget to #ThankANurse this week!

Coming Soon: June Partner Community Meeting

The Region 2 RESPTC team will be hosting the next Partner Community meeting in June. This meeting will center around the Region 2 Needs Assessment findings and sharing our training plan for the community. We hope to see you all there!

NETEC Trainings

The National Emerging Special Pathogens Training & Education Center (NETEC) routinely publishes new courses and trainings for nurses, physicians, emergency responders, and other health care professionals. To view and enroll the *free* trainings, visit the link [here](#).

We want to highlight your work to prepare for and respond to special pathogen threats. If you have a special pathogen preparedness or response story, person, or team to spotlight, please send it to BellevueSPP@nychhc.org. Additionally, if you or a colleague would like to join the Region 2 RESPTC Partner Community, please contact [Alyssa Wong](#).