CDC I-Catalyst Program Project
DSNS Communication Tool for Situational
Awareness Interview Protocol Guide and Questions

Background Information: CDC's partnerships with private industry and other federal, state and local agencies ensure every step of public health response is coordinated. The exchange of relevant and timely data and information between CDC and its state and local partners is critical to emergency response activities and decisions. By analyzing critical information about many kinds of hazards that can affect public health, CDC and its partners turn this information into tools that leaders and responders can use to help people stay safer and healthier. This information gathering and analysis is referred to as situational awareness, a process of capturing clues and cues in the emergency environment, making sense of the information, and predicting what will happen next. Maintaining situational awareness is a critical tool for effective decision-making during public health emergencies.

Currently, the CDC Division of Strategic National Stockpile (DSNS) does not have a way to exchange real time data or information or maintain situational awareness with partners located in State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial (STLT) areas. Current modes and means of communication are via phone & email during response operations; these singular ways of information exchange are limited to those directly involved in or included on the call or email. The ability to identify a solution that would enable the exchange and sharing of real time information both horizontally across partners and vertically up and down the emergency response command chain is desired.

Interviewer to Respondent: Hi, my name is …Thank you for your time. I know you are busy, I only need about 30 minutes of your time. I'm from CDC working on a project involving exchange of information and communications in real time during a public health disaster, and want to ask some questions to learn more about your role and the department influenza planning and management activities. Thank you for participating in this data collection effort. We will use the opinions and impressions you provide only for analyzing strategies for improving communication tools for better situation awareness. You will not be identified in any published reporting. Individual respondents will not be identified in reports except with their express permission.

I understand you have a role in Situational Awareness and Emergency Response. Can you describe your actual role and job functions?

1. How do you communicate with different stakeholders during an emergency response event?
    a. What communications channels or mechanisms do you use?
    b. What challenges do you face communicating with multiple stakeholders during an emergency response?
2. How do you use technology to communicate in an emergency response?

    a. What kinds of technology & technology systems have you used?

    b. What challenges have you experienced using technology to communicate in an emergency response?

3. How do you currently track information and data during an emergency response event?

    a. How do you use technology to help track and monitor data and information during these events?

    b. What challenges have you experienced using technology to track and monitor data/information in an emergency response?

4. How do you share information and data associated with an emergency response?

    a. What kinds of technology & technology systems have you used?

    b. What challenges have you experienced sharing data in an emergency response?

5. How do you maintain Situational Awareness (SA) encounter during a response?

    a. How do you use technology to help maintain SA during emergency response events?

    b. What challenges have you experienced using technology to maintain SA in an emergency response?

6. How do your coordinate response efforts with staff, partners, and stakeholders in the field?

    a. How do you use technology to coordinate multiple staff, partners, and stakeholders in the field?

    b. What challenges do you face coordinating response efforts in the field?

Thank you for your time.