



WYOMING TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT



METHODS

Key informant interviews assessed the training needs of public health personnel in Wyoming in the area of foodborne disease surveillance and outbreak response. The interview guide included questions about the informant's position, including foodborne and enteric disease outbreaks investigated in the past year by the informant and their team. Interviews were transcribed by hand and summarized in an Excel spreadsheet. Qualitative data were analyzed using a basic qualitative inductive approach (i.e. reading, coding displaying, reducing, and interpreting).

INFORMANTS

Fourteen informants were interviewed by phone during January and February of 2014. The 10 environmental health specialists, 2 epidemiologists, and 2 public health nurses held positions ranging from entry level to senior managerial. They represented both state and local public health agencies. The majority (10; 71%) of informants had worked 10+ years in a position where they were tasked with responding to outbreaks. Everyone reported receiving some form of training in foodborne disease surveillance and outbreak response. Only 3 informants said they had received training in the past year; many said it had been a number of years since their last training.

RESULTS

RANKING OF TRAINING NEEDS

Interviewing Skills

1

Foodborne Disease Surveillance

2

Overview of Outbreak Investigation

3

INFORMANT INSIGHT

"We are mostly expected to seek out trainings on our own."
- Epidemiologist

"It's always good to have training just as a refresher for people who don't deal with outbreaks on a regular basis."
- Environmental Health Specialist

"Courses should be tailored to include continuing education credits that are needed for a lot professional standards that environmental health specialists are required to have for their position. Employers are more willing to send employees to a training if they get some sort of benefits."
- Environmental Health Specialist



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TOP BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATING IN TRAININGS

Funding



1

Time Commitment



2

Travel



3

PREFERENCE FOR TRAINING MODALITIES

Team Training



As opposed to individual learning because outbreak investigations rely on group work

Online trainings are more feasible, however, due to limited time & resources



In-person



INFORMANT INSIGHT CHALLENGES WITH OUTBREAK INVESTIGATION WORK

"Cooperation from establishment managers or owners. Employers have made it difficult for employees to come to interviews."
- Epidemiologist

"We don't investigate outbreaks very often, so we don't have a lot of experience coordinating investigations."
- Environmental Health Specialist

"There's no consistency in how outbreaks are coordinated with the state, and there's a sense that the investigation belongs to the state and not the local jurisdiction."
- Public Health Nurse

INTERVIEW FINDINGS

- ▶ **Training Needs Differed Slightly by Occupation**
Environmental health specialists and public health nurses were interested in basic trainings, such as 'Foodborne Disease Surveillance' and 'Overview of Outbreak Investigations', while epidemiologists found 'Communicating with the Media and Public' and 'Conducting Trace-Back Investigations' to be topics they most needed training in.
- ▶ **Useful Resources during Outbreak Investigations**
Questionnaires | Fact sheets for families & clients | Software pertaining to outbreak response | Checklists for specific pathogens or different outbreak settings | Contact sheets of key personnel at WDH & other county HDs