

Surveillance Summary Sheet



Definition

Ongoing, systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of health data essential to the planning, implementation and evaluation of public health practice, closely integrated with the timely dissemination to those who need to know.

What do I need to know?

- Provides data on priority health problems which produce the highest morbidity and mortality
- Limited to public health matters that can and will be acted upon.
- System should be as simple as possible and linked to a response strategy.
- Frequency of data collection should be adapted to the situation.
- Responsibilities of the surveillance system should be clearly assigned.
- Surveillance systems should be flexible to respond to new issues.
- The common surveillance system in emergencies – is the early warning and response for disease outbreaks
- There are two common types of surveillance a) facility based surveillance and b) community-based surveillance
- Relatively cheap as compared to survey, and recommended method to track impact of program

What are my objectives?

- Provide information on a regular basis for use in decision making
- Determine health priorities
- Assist the planning of interventions
- Ensure resources are properly targeted
- Guide program implementation
- Provide early warning of epidemics, and are trigger for response
- Evaluate program coverage and effectiveness

How do I achieve my goals and objectives?

Mortality surveillance

It is essential to have a denominator in mortality reporting.

- Potential data sources: Hospitals/ clinics, Burial grounds, Shroud distribution
- Limitations: Deaths under-reported, Exaggerated, Concealed, Denominator inflated, cause of death non-conclusive
- Advantage: provide a mortality estimate overtime, alert in case of high fatality due to an epidemic

Morbidity surveillance:

- Case definitions (syndromic Surveillance) – need to be agreed with all partners to have sound data
- Laboratory confirmation: needed only for selective conditions

Program indicator surveillance:

- Outpatient clinic: # consultations per week per total population
 - # new consultations/wk/month
 - consultations/health care provider/day

- Water and Sanitation
 - # liters of water/person/day
 - # persons/latrine

Key Elements of a Good Surveillance System

1. Responsibility assigned to one organization per location
2. Demographic, mortality, morbidity (priority area) program information collected
3. Standardized case definitions and forms used
4. Training of field staff in use of case definitions
5. Has a community based element where appropriate
6. Surveillance data used to trigger and prioritize response

- Records should be kept of all data collected
- focal agency analyzes, summarizes and shares data and provides feedback
- The surveillance system is constantly assessed for accuracy
- The system only collects data which are useful and needed for response
- Data are not just collected, but used for programming decisions

How do I evaluate the surveillance system?

- Evaluation should seek to determine if objectives need to be redefined, or the situation needs to be reassessed.
- Evaluation should seek to determine if response based on surveillance data was timely, appropriate, and effective
- Evaluation should seek to determine if data collected is accurate, analyzed timely and accurately, and shared