
Closing Observations:
Lessons Learned
& Questions Unanswered
National Syndromic Surveillance Conference
October 23 – 24th, 2003

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Thank you

Closing Observations

- Key themes
- Recommendations



"Are you just pissing and moaning, or can you verify what you're saying with data?"

Source: *The New Yorker*

Themes from Last Year

- What is syndromic surveillance?
- Data sources
- Analytic approaches
- Evaluation
- Investigation of signals
- Privacy concerns
- National versus local
- Who owns syndromic surveillance?
- BT versus other uses

2003 Conference

Themes from ~~Last Year~~

- What is syndromic surveillance?
- Data sources
- Analytic approaches
- Evaluation
- Investigation of signals
- Privacy concerns
- National versus local
- Who owns syndromic surveillance?
- ~~BT versus other uses~~ Integration
- Partnerships

Adapted from

Mostashari F, Hartman J. *J Urban Health* 2003;80(2-S1):i1-7

Epidemic Detection

Old View

Syndromic Surveillance



versus

Recognition by astute clinician

versus



Traditional reporting

Epidemic Detection

New View

Syndromic Surveillance



Recognition by astute clinician



Traditional reporting

Public Health Surveillance for BT

- Attack scenario & context
- Information needs & uses
- Choice of surveillance method (data source, reporting process, analysis, etc.)
- Epidemiology, clinical manifestations, patterns of care and service use
 - How will this affect detectability?
 - How does this affect optimal surveillance method?

Recommendations to Feds

- Evaluation
 - Monitor practice
 - Focused evaluation studies
 - Retrospective analyses
 - Models

Recommendations to Feds

- Funding
 - Clarify roles of different agencies
 - Coordinate
 - Articulate research agenda
 - Encourage academic-governmental partnerships
 - ? Role for centers of excellence
 - Research
 - Evaluation—What works in practice
 - Technical assistance

Big Questions

- Who should be doing syndromic surveillance?
- How much?
- Where?
- How?

Need & Time for Guidelines

- So you want to do syndromic surveillance...
 - Planning steps
 - Who to involve
 - Menu picks—advantages & disadvantages
 - Strategy for responding to alarms
 - What utility to expect

Partners—One more to include

- Public health
- Clinicians/providers
- Data providers
- Emergency response
- Legal/Law enforcement
- Representatives of the communities we serve

Look forward to continued progress

See you next year