



Harris County
HCPHES
Public Health & Environmental Services
Veterinary Public Health Division



After Action Report 7th Annual Zoonotic Disease Conference



After Action Report

Organizational Name:

Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services Veterinary Public Health
(HCPHES-VPH)
Harris County Veterinary Medical Association
(HCVMA)
National School of Tropical Medicine-Baylor College of Medicine
(NSTM-BCM)

Project Name: 7th Annual Zoonotic Disease Conference

Project Completion Date: September 14, 2014

Project Purpose: Develop and nurture veterinary networks and relationships through education and support and become the premier zoonotic disease networking and information center for veterinary related professions in Harris County.

Short Term Goals: Increase veterinary community awareness of the HCPHES Veterinary Public Health Zoonosis section capabilities and services as well as educate and communicate critical and relevant zoonotic disease information that impacts public health and safety, animal health and emergency/disaster preparedness.

Short Term Impact

- Zoonotic Disease Conference was attended by 98 veterinarians, 53 registered veterinary technicians, 9 certified veterinary assistants, 13 veterinary assistants and other staff; 3 health care practitioners and 4 animal control officers, and
- The veterinary community received new and relevant information concerning zoonotic diseases and public health information.

Long Term Goal: The HCPHES Veterinary Public Health Zoonosis section becomes the focal point for all zoonotic disease concerns, issues, and information emanating from and to veterinary health clinics within Harris County.

Long Term Impact

- Conference attendees received zoonotic information through the HCPHES Veterinary Public Health Zoonosis section conduit;
- Conference attendees have met the HCPHES Veterinary Public Health Zoonosis section personnel;
- Conference attendees were encouraged to use the HCPHES Veterinary Public Health Zoonosis section for surveillance and data gathering of local zoonotic disease outbreaks and trends; and
- Conference attendees were exposed to zoonotic disease experts and the HCPHES Veterinary Public Health personnel.

Project Summary:

Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services, Veterinary Public Health (HCPHES VPH), and Harris County Veterinary Medical Association (HCVMA) received the sum of \$1,500 from Merial, Ltd. and \$1,000 from the Jacob & Terese Hershey Foundation to fund 12.1 percent of the net costs of one zoonotic disease conference for the local veterinary community. The National School of Tropical Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine provided a venue sponsorship in the amount of \$1313.70.

Materials Development & Venue

The sponsorships from Merial, Ltd. and Jacob & Terese Hershey Foundation helped support the development of professional conference materials and handouts for conference attendees. Each attendee was supplied with a HCPHES VPH imprinted zippered pad folio containing conference reference materials, a jotter containing a calculator and a pen imprinted with the HCPHES VPH logo.

The sponsorships also helped to fund catering services. The venue proved to be a professional and well laid out facility and food servings were plentiful. For breakfast, each attendee was offered scrambled eggs, bacon, biscuits, coffee, orange juice and water. Lunch consisted of a salad, rolls, parmesan chicken or vegetable lasagna, steamed vegetables, macaroni and cheese, and iced tea or water. Fresh baked cookies, coffee, tea and water were provided as an afternoon snack.

Conference Day

Location

The all day conference was scheduled and held at the Baylor College of Medicine-Cullen Auditorium in Houston, Texas. This site was chosen as:

- the local veterinary community is familiar with its location;
- the site is well equipped for professional conferences; and
- collaboration with the National School of Tropical Medicine increased the visibility and professionalism of the conference.

Place cards displaying the sponsor logos were placed in the center of each dining table to let the attendees know how much we appreciated the support of our sponsors.



Speakers

Baylor College of Medicine-National School of Tropical Medicine provided three speaker sponsorships and Merial, Ltd. provided one speaker sponsorship for the event. Dr. Kathryn Jones, Dr. Kristy Murray, Dr. Laila Woc-Colburn and Dr. Alex Thomasson shared their insights and expertise on the subject matter presented. In addition, Dr. Terry Blasdel and Dr. Karen Snowden volunteered their time to speak at the conference. Many of our attendees personally expressed their appreciation for these speakers on their conference survey, as well as verbally.

Topics

Conference educational topics primarily focused on zoonotic disease awareness.

HCPHES and Public Health

Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH

HCPHES Veterinary Public Health

Michael White, DVM, MS

One Health: Addressing the Global Burden of Chagas Disease

Kathryn Jones, DVM, PhD

Rabies: the Virus, Quarantine & PEP Treatment

Dipa Brahmhatt, VMD, MS, MPH

Laila Woc-Colburn, MD, DTM&H, FACP

Leptospirosis

J. Alex Thomasson, DVM

Murine Typhus and West Nile Virus

Kristy Murray, DVM, PhD

An Unusual Presentation of Human Herpes Virus 1 in a Common Marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*)

Terry Blasdel, DVM

Leishmaniasis: “Foreign” Parasites in Our Own Backyards

Karen Snowden, DVM, PhD, DACVM (Parasitology)

At the close of the conference, surveys were collected, and continuing education certificates were distributed.



Conference Survey

Conference attendees were asked to complete a conference survey.

The feedback provided was as follows:

- Greater than 95 percent of conference attendees
 - believed continuing education credit was an important feature of the conference;
 - were satisfied with the registration process;
 - agreed that the conference materials were more than adequate and informative;
 - were satisfied with the professionalism and abilities of the speakers;
 - enjoyed the conference setting and facilities;
 - agreed that information provided was informative and accurate;
 - thought the conference was well organized;
 - agreed that the conference staff were helpful and courteous; and
 - indicated that they would recommend future conferences to others.
- Greater than 90 percent of conference attendees
 - agreed with the length of conference presentations and flow; and
 - ranked this conference above average when compared to other conferences.
- 81 percent of conference attendees indicated that they plan to attend the conference next year

The attendees were asked to submit recommendations for future zoonotic disease conference topics. Not all of the topics requested were zoonotic in nature, but they did provide insight into the educational interests of the Harris County veterinary community.

Requested future conference topics included:

babesiosis-vaccination/vaccine research, alternative treatments; bartonella; botulism-cases from traveling from affected areas to eradicated areas; brucella; Chikungunya; Dermatological zoonoses-major issue w/ client communication & zoonosis; Dengue; Ebola; Emerging Infectious Zoonotic Diseases; food animal zoonoses; emerging tropical diseases; hantavirus; influenza; correlation between diseases and recent immigration status; LCMV; listeria; mad cow disease; US children and hookworms; parasitology; plague; GI parasites; Q fever; update on murine typhus in future; shelter medicine; case studies; broad overview of zoonosis from the exotic animal pet trade; information on scabies and ringworm and educating clients; leptospirosis-discuss human and animal infections; local emerging diseases; Mad cow disease; how can veterinary practices pass on the learned information to the community; rickettsial diseases; ringworm; surgical aspect of veterinary medicine incorporating how zoonosis can be better kept safe tick diseases, skin diseases, MRSA; toxoplasmosis; zoonotic diseases of pocket pets and exotics commonly sold to the public; protocols vets should take for reporting animal bites and the laws for pet owners and vet.

Suggestions for conference improvements

Attendees were also asked how the conference could be improved.

Suggestions for improvement included:

- Comfort: offer more cookies during the afternoon break; have a warmer room; offer bottled water to participants.
- Venue: negotiate allowing beverages in the lecture hall; complimentary parking; and host the conference at various locations throughout the city so it will be closer to some attendees some years.
- Attendee Materials: have larger print on notes pages
- Content: allow more time for questions; add a larger variety of topics; include a hands-on portion; include a roundtable discussion.
- Other: keep speakers on time, as some speakers ran longer in the morning.

Praise Comments

“Conference was very well organized! Food was great!”

“It's good. Keep up the good work! Thanks.”

“Keep in this location-facilities were great, good lectures, great food and breaks.”

“was good all around”

“Perfect!”

“Very satisfied with the organization and information speakers presented.”

Expenditures:

The sum of \$2,925.00 was used to pay for the materials, costing an average of \$14.63 per attendee for conference handouts.

The sum of \$1,313.70 was used to pay for the venue rental. Food service expenditures totaled \$5,866.62 averaging \$29.33 per attendee for food and beverages.

Overall, the 7th Annual Zoonotic Disease Conference was executed to plan and within budget.

2014 Annual Zoonotic Disease Veterinary Conference						
Description	Cost	Contributions				
Project Management	2,800.00	Merial, Ltd.	Jacob and Terese Hershey Foundation	BCM Funds	HCPHES Funds	Services In-Kind
Support Staff Time	2,000.00					
Transportation	245.00					
Speakers	950.00					
Speaker Gifts	404.91					
Door Prizes	180.00					
Venue Rental	1,313.70					
Food/Drinks	5,866.62					
Tablecloths	479.60					
Attendee Materials	2,925.00					
Printing/Materials Development	3,500.00					
Total Cost	20,664.83					
		\$1,500.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,313.70	\$10,856.13	\$5,995.00
		7.3%	4.8%	6.4%	52.5%	29.0%
Merial, Ltd. provided speaker travel and honorarium of approximately \$3,000.00. *Not included in our conference budget						

Hot Wash Report:

Soon after the conference, HCPHES VPH chaired a “hot wash” (after incident meeting) to quickly ascertain what worked well and what could be improved upon.

Below are the results of this “Hot wash”:

Sustain	Needs Improvement
Volunteers to assist with registration & CE certificate distribution	Volunteers to work in shifts of 7-9:30am and 3-5:00 pm
Partnership with HCVMA & Baylor	Registration should be online only to prevent lost forms and misspelled names due to poor handwriting
Conference held on a Sunday in September	Zoonosis staff should be free to meet and greet attendees during check-in and CE Certificate distribution
CE Certificate distribution separated in lobby and lunch area	Keep speakers on time
Two serving lines for breakfast and four serving lines for lunch	
Free-of-charge to participants	
CE Certificate tables facing auditorium for easier distribution	
Luby's caterer and food options	
Event staff in matching apparel for increased visibility	
Sponsor tables in dining/conversation area of conference	
Booths for sponsors and co-hosts	
Introduction of speakers done by Dr. Brahmhatt in AM & Tiffany in PM	

Conclusion:

The 7th Annual Zoonotic Disease Conference was a huge success. Thanks to the hard work and kind generosity of Merial, Ltd., Jacob & Terese Hershey Foundation, HCPHES-VPH, HCVMA and the NSTM-BCM. We would also like to thank Dr. Terry Blasdel and Dr. Karen Snowden for volunteering their time to speak at the event. The conference not only provided a vehicle to significantly increase HCPHES VPH awareness amongst the veterinary community, but also increased overall knowledge regarding zoonotic disease issues. The partnership between the hosts and sponsors complimented each organization's mission and services.

