

February 2021

2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium Event Report

*Prepared by Kahuina Consulting, LLC for
The Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)*



National Syndromic Surveillance Program
Community of Practice
Resources that Advance the Science and Practice of Syndromic Surveillance



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2020 SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE SYMPOSIUM EVENT REPORT

Prepared for CSTE

FEBRUARY 1, 2021



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2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium Planning Committee

The Planning Committee provided leadership in the planning of the 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium by shaping its outcomes, design, and content.

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Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)

CSTE provided valuable logistics, administration, and communications for the 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium.

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Aaron Kite-Powell (NSSP)
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Loren Rodgers (NSSP)
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Event Summary

The virtual 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium, hosted by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Syndromic Surveillance Program (NSSP), provided over 30 hours of syndromic surveillance-related trainings, discussions, and presentations from November 17th – 19th, 2020. The Symposium harnessed the experience, insights, and ideas of epidemiologists and public health professionals practicing syndromic surveillance (SyS) with over 550 registrants from 47 states and eight countries.

NSSP Community of Practice (CoP) members and key CDC and CSTE staff developed the Symposium's design and delivered content across multiple tracks, topics, and session formats. The NSSP BioSense Platform—inclusive of shared tools, methods, data, and a thriving CoP—provided common ground for the Symposium. Introductory and advanced trainings on NSSP BioSense Platform tools complemented discussions on best practices to use those tools in SyS methodology, analysis, interpretation, and communication.

Five overarching themes emerged throughout the course of the Symposium:

1. As field utilization, participation, and demands have grown so have the needs for data quality and standardization.
2. Data sharing has expanded the utility—and expectation—of SyS.
3. Putting data to action does not end with implementation nor evaluation—the process must include communication of data with partners and stakeholders, including decision-makers and the public.
4. Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic reflects the creativity and resilience of the SyS community.
5. Leveraging the full potential of syndromic data requires traditional and non-traditional collaborations within and across sectors.

Access and utilization of the NSSP BioSense Platform is approaching nationwide saturation, providing local, state, and national COVID-19 response efforts with consistent and timely data. Symposium roundtable discussions on data sharing and decision-making advanced the utility of the NSSP BioSense Platform as a national emergency response resource, and the role of SyS in the COVID-19 public health response received dedicated attention.

By providing a thoughtful and engaging platform to exchange ideas, the Symposium both contributed to workforce development and boosted morale during a challenging time. The outcomes of the Symposium demonstrate that collaboration among partner organizations, in combination with leadership and expertise from the field, can foster capacity-building and enhance knowledge among a diverse group of public health professionals engaged in syndromic surveillance.

The success of the event highlights that as the NSSP BioSense Platform evolves, applications of SyS expand, and the workforce continues to grow, opportunities for knowledge sharing must be prioritized and made recurrent. Meeting other practitioners and developing new skills is crucial to syndromic surveillance practice continuing to expand in utility. Additionally, trainings and other hands-on resources should be developed for multiple levels of skill and made widely available to ensure that the practicing workforce is properly trained to respond to the evolving requests of syndromic surveillance practitioners.

Background and Context

Syndromic surveillance (SyS) is an epidemiologic method for detecting, understanding, and monitoring health events – its practice is useful across all areas of public health and allows epidemiologists to better prepare for and respond to events of public health relevance (CDC, 2021).

SyS largely began, and continues, as a practice-driven

science that draws on epidemiological, informatics, and big data methods to produce actionable public health surveillance information. SyS data, collected in near real-time, are used to address chronic, acute, and emerging public health threats. Peer-to-peer learning, collaborative problem solving, knowledge exchange, and trust are integral to growing the ability of public health professionals to use these large and complex data sets. Opportunities for professionals from across the country to gather and learn are critical in order to build and sustain SyS capacity nationwide.

SyS is a crucial tool in local and state public health programs—it is being increasingly utilized by federal programs for ongoing public health concerns, including national opioid overdose surveillance. The CDC's NSSP manages the collaborative SyS system of people, tools, and data, enabling local and state jurisdictions to use a national SyS platform while also providing utility to other CDC programs. With more than 5,000 contributing facilities spanning 47 states and the District of Columbia, the NSSP provides access to over 73% of the nation's emergency department visits through the NSSP BioSense Platform.¹

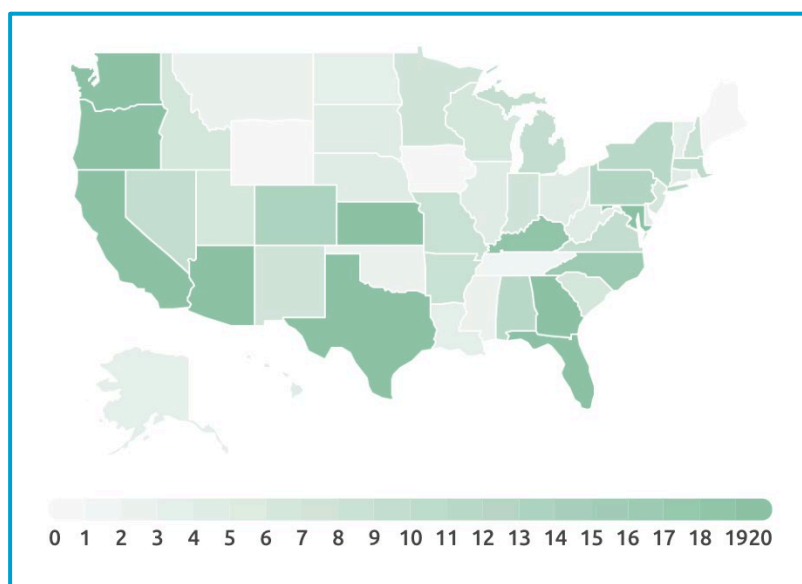


Figure 1. Symposium registration by state

¹ The CDC's National Syndromic Surveillance Program: <https://www.cdc.gov/nssp/overview.html#bioSense>

The coronavirus pandemic has significantly impacted the health and well-being of individuals, communities, and societies. The pandemic also highlights the critical role that SyS and the NSSP BioSense Platform plays in local, state, and national surveillance and response—bringing together stakeholders and data to monitor COVID-19 and other public health problems. Convening practitioners, even virtually, provides an environment to explore SyS applications in tracking inequities in COVID-19 outcomes, monitoring and reporting mass vaccination campaigns, and partnering with local and state public health agencies to inform the national COVID-19 response.

Event Overview

Purpose

The 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium provided an engaging and interactive national forum for over 550 attendees across 47 states to learn new skills from technical experts, discuss the future of the NSSP CoP, and build SyS capacity at state, local, and national levels. Specifically, the Symposium met the following objectives:

1. Enhanced the ability of local, state, and federal health agencies to respond to national public health emergencies by enhancing data sharing and analytic capacities;
2. Developed the ability of new NSSP BioSense Platform users to utilize syndromic data in public health actions for all-hazards or conditions;
3. Advanced the ability of current SyS practitioners/epidemiologists to acquire population health insights using new SyS methods, platform tools, and practices; and
4. Cultivated new peer-to-peer professional relationships for mutual aid, collaborative problem solving, and social support.

“There was a good variety of interesting topics at the symposium... [and] creative ways for participants to connect with each other.” – 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium Attendee

Program Design

The program design met new and experienced SyS practitioners' expectations to build new skills through targeted trainings, roundtable discussions, and break-out sessions. Sessions were categorized by the following learning tracks:

- Data Sharing
- Practical Methods and Application
- Innovation
- COVID-19
- Training

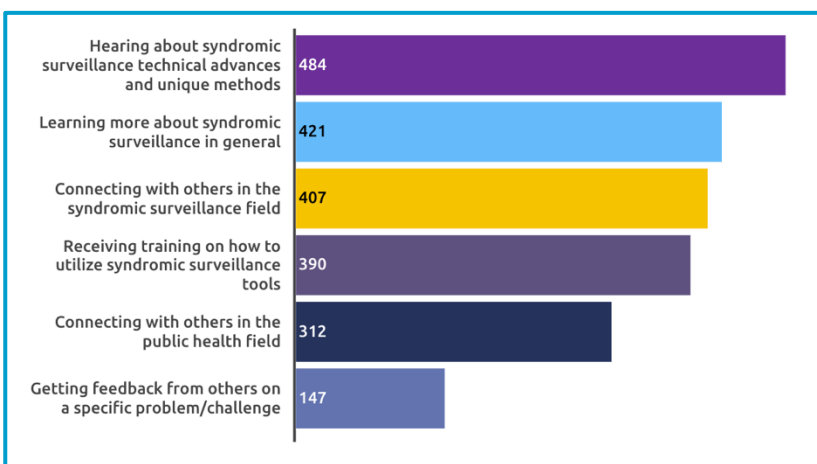


Figure 2. Attendee's expectations at registration

The Symposium provided a forum for peer-to-peer knowledge exchange through diversified offerings over three days (Figure 3). Providing four hours of content a day over three days accommodated participants with competing priorities, particularly those supporting local, state, and national COVID-19 responses.

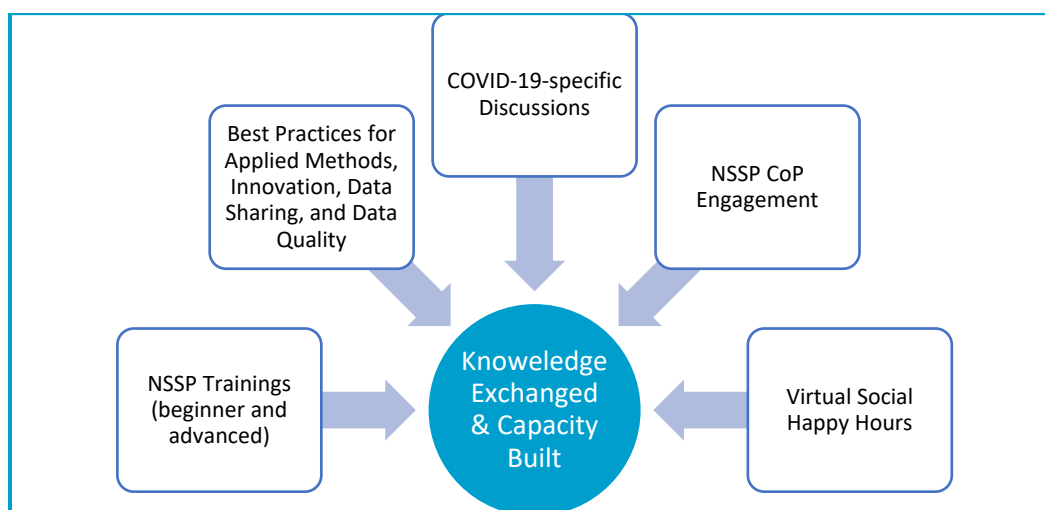


Figure 3. Community interests were categorized to provide participants with multiple opportunities to exchange knowledge and build capacity.

Developed in partnership with NSSP CoP leaders and CDC experts, session content highlighted the wealth of work, extensive experience, and insight available in the community (Figure 4). Targeted outreach to professionals from across the country ensured a variety of representation, use cases, and success stories of SyS practice.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
• Plenary presentation on the past, present, and future of public health surveillance • Tailored data sharing track (successful practice, legal authority, and public use data set) • Roundtable discussions on new partner engagement • Breakout presentations on methods and data access • Trainings on introductory NSSP ESSENCE use and syndrome definition development	• Breakout presentations on applied methods, including syndrome definition creation, data visualization, and data quality • Breakout presentations and roundtable discussions on novel SyS applications, including health equity • Trainings on introductory dashboard creation, success story communication, and advanced API data access	• Plenary presentation and panel on the national, state, and local experiences using SyS in the COVID-19 response • COVID-19-specific discussions on syndrome definition, data integration, and data quality • Demonstration of NSSP COVID-19 dashboard • Community conversation on NSSP CoP activities and opportunities for collaboration

Figure 4. Symposium program was delivered over three days with diverse discussion and trainings topics for all experience levels.

Overarching Themes

Key points that emerged from 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium presentations and discussions about SyS utilization, sharing, action, and partnerships are described below.

1. **As field utilization, participation, and demands have grown so have the needs for data quality and standardization.** During the event, the community made advances in establishing a public use shared data set for national emergencies—a need that has been made evident by the coronavirus pandemic response as many jurisdictions grapple with balancing syndromic data privacy with the desire to make data more broadly accessible. Additionally, although many jurisdictions noted that COVID-19 has helped improve data quality, other consistent challenges have become apparent including 1) collecting data on race and ethnicity and 2) adding additional fields like travel history and hospitalization status.
2. **Data sharing has expanded the utility—and expectation—of SyS.** The NSSP BioSense Platform’s functionality has made data sharing technologically easy, and some states have succeeded in progressing with use case-specific data sharing projects to operationalize cross-border surveillance. However, site-specific data policy concerns continue to be noted as a deterrent for such projects. While privacy officers stand out as assets for facilitating data sharing for public health surveillance, continued community dialogue is also critical to ensure transparency of the public health value of more shared data and/or a granular public use data set. As the NSSP BioSense Platform continues to evolve and the applications of SyS expand, the workforce will also grow—this necessitates continual opportunities to meet

other practitioners and develop new skills and trust, which are critical for successful data sharing.

3. **Putting data to action does not end with implementation nor evaluation—the process must include communication of data with partners and stakeholders, including decision-makers and the public.** Visualizing data through accessible and informative dashboards is a science and an art, and selling the utility, successes, and impact of SyS relies on skillful storytelling and presentation of data. Practitioners are eager to continue integrating syndromic data into dashboards for decision-making. The NSSP BioSense Platform’s functionality to call queries using Application Programming Interface (APIs) has expanded the possibilities for integration with other data sources in both public- and internal-facing dashboards.

“I liked that there were presentations from folks that we don't often hear from in the normal NSSP CoP meetings/workgroups. This gave us an opportunity to hear about projects/work that I think we might have otherwise never known about.”
– 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium Attendee

4. **Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic reflects the creativity and resilience of the SyS community.** The COVID-19 pandemic has created an historic opportunity for the SyS community to leverage its years of work to establish a centralized SyS system/platform. The NSSP BioSense Platform not only provides a national picture of the burden of disease but also allows for the rapid development of standardized syndrome definitions that can be applied to jurisdictional data across the country. SyS has proved critical in measuring the pandemic’s disproportionate effect across race and ethnicity and the shift in health seeking behavior as people avoided emergency care. In addition to continuing to collaborate on how best to visualize and communicate familiar data sources, the community has also taken this time to negotiate the inclusion of and utilization of newer, corporate laboratory data.
5. **Leveraging the full potential of syndromic data requires traditional and non-traditional collaborations within and across sectors.** Partnerships can take years to develop, highlighting that data sharing is not just a technical feat but also a journey in establishing relationships, fostering a common vision and agenda, and continually adjusting practices to meet the needs of stakeholders. There are more tools to support the process of making data public-facing, such as dashboards and other visualizations, which allows for the engagement of new and different audiences. It is critical to observe and celebrate successes of collaborations to energize and strengthen partnerships and demonstrate the utility of data sharing.

Event Evaluation

The 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium's objectives were satisfactorily met: participation aided expanding SyS utility, discovering and applying new methods, and engaging with the community. Participants' most valued event aspects included the diversity of content and the variety in which it was presented.

Although virtual formats can be challenging to engage and exchange ideas, participants appreciated the opportunity for professional development and community building despite the many demands of competing day-to-day work. Participants found the virtual platforms and technologies easy to navigate and supportive of learning content and connecting with others.

"I like that we had the opportunity to meet virtually this year. That was a really big deal. I enjoyed the momentum still able to occur virtually....It all was so syndromic at its core." – 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium Attendee

Findings for Future NSSP CoP Activities

To better understand the priorities, challenges, and needs of public health surveillance professionals, the 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium's post-event assessment included informal NSSP CoP field questions. Response highlight the community's:

- Desire to explore analytic methods, visualization tools, and novel uses of SyS
- Need for more trainings in NSSP ESSENCE, data access with APIs, and RStudio
- Request for the NSSP CoP to focus on topics such as COVID-19, data sharing, data quality, communication, and tools

"[I appreciated] the breadth of sessions on relevant topics to the participants (query building and validation, data governance, overdose surveillance, COVID-19 related topics, etc.)." – 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium Attendee

The broader community is aligned with CDC/NSSP and the NSSP CoP on ways to advance SyS practice—improve data representation, sharing, access, and quality. Building workforce capacity through training and continuing education opportunities will help diversify the applications of SyS in public health decision-making. Communicating SyS use cases and success stories will further the adoption of SyS methodology and data to advance public health initiatives with new stakeholders.

Looking Ahead

Opportunities to exchange ideas and build relationships remain vital to the core work of the syndromic community and success of the NSSP. Given the 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium was the first virtual event hosted by CSTE in collaboration with CDC/NSSP, there is a critical opportunity to apply the wealth of experience, information, and ideas shared by speakers, participants, and staff to future events and current public health initiatives. CSTE and CDC/NSSP should continue providing space for broad community engagement to enhance SyS workforce development and practice.

Considerations for Future Events

As the NSSP BioSense Platform evolves and the applications of SyS expand, the workforce continues to grow, necessitating continual opportunities to meet other practitioners and develop new skills and trust. Looking more broadly at Symposium discussions and post-event assessment findings, the following are noted for future event consideration:

- Continuing to identify ways to provide space for public health professionals practicing SyS to connect and learn from one another, being mindful of day-to-day demands and limitations
- Continuing to provide accessible and diverse options for workforce training and development to 1) meet the needs of those new to SyS and 2) build capacity for current and evolving requests of those practicing syndromic surveillance

Event Lessons Learned

Due to the pandemic and other pressing factors, it is likely professional events like the Symposium will continue to be virtual for the short- and medium-term. Listed below are lessons learned from the 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium.

- Make session recordings available as soon as possible following the event, both for participants that were unable to attend and for broader public access.
- Increase the planning time and support to accommodate the breadth of a national symposium, including abstract solicitation, scientific peer-review of abstracts, and speaker invitation.
- Recruit motivated community moderators that expect to lead the development of their topics and sessions, including topic descriptions and learning objectives.
- Ensure session descriptions are as detailed and accurate as possible so participants can select the sessions that best suit their needs.
- Provide as much lead time as possible for facilitators, moderators, and speakers—hold orientation and/or training sessions as far in advance as possible to allow time for preparing content and materials, connecting with other facilitators, moderators, and speakers, and clarifying expectations.

Appendix A – Daily Block Schedules

Day 1 – Tuesday, November 17, 2020

1:00-1:15pm EST	Daily Opening, Logistics, Overview			
1:15-1:30pm EST	Welcoming Remarks			
1:30-1:45pm EST	Keynote Address			
1:45-2:00pm EST				
2:00-2:15pm EST	...BREAK...			
2:15-2:30pm EST	Training: NSSP ESSENCE 101	Breakout: Spike, Alert, GO!	Breakout: Data Access and Integration	Breakout: Successful State-led Data Sharing Collaborations
2:30-2:45pm EST				
2:45-3:00pm EST				
3:00-3:15pm EST		...BREAK...		
3:15-3:30pm EST	Training: Custom Syndrome Definition in NSSP ESSENCE	Lightning: Significant Findings	Roundtable: Bringing New Partners to the Table	Breakout: Can I Do That? Ask a Lawyer.
3:30-3:45pm EST				
3:45-4:00pm EST				
4:00-4:15pm EST	...BREAK...			
4:15-4:30pm EST	Training: Custom Syndrome Definition in NSSP ESSENCE	Breakout: Match Point - Data Matching Across Sources		Roundtable: Establishing a Public Use Shared Data Set
4:30-4:45pm EST				
4:45-5:00pm EST				
5:00-5:15pm EST	...BREAK...			
5:15-5:30pm EST	Virtual Happy Hour			
5:30-5:45pm EST				
5:45-6:00pm EST				
				2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium Tracks
				Daily Openings, Virtual Happy Hours, Symposium Closing
				Welcoming Remarks + Keynote
				Data Sharing
				Practical Methods and Application
				Innovation
				Training
				COVID
				NSSP Community of Practice

Day 2 – Wednesday, November 18, 2020

1:00-1:15pm EST	Daily Opening, Logistics, Overview		
1:15-1:30pm EST	Training: Call Up Your Data Using APIs	Breakout: Querying from Scratch - Cooking Up New Syndromes	Training: Data Sharing Step-by-Step Using the AMC
1:30-1:45pm EST			
1:45-2:00pm EST			
2:00-2:15pm EST	...BREAK...		
2:15-2:30pm EST	Training: Telling Your Story - Insights and Tips to Promote Syndromic Surveillance	Breakout: The Art of Surveillance - Data Visualizations	Lightning: New Tactics for Old Problems
2:30-2:45pm EST			
2:45-3:00pm EST			
3:00-3:15pm EST	...BREAK...		
3:15-3:30pm EST	Training: Dashboard Creation in NSSP ESSENCE	Breakout: Making the Best of a SyS Situation - Data Quality for SyS	Roundtable: COVID, Current Events, and More - Discussing Syndromic Surveillance Practices in 2020
3:30-3:45pm EST			
3:45-4:00pm EST			
4:00-4:15pm EST	...BREAK...		
4:15-4:30pm EST	Virtual Happy Hour		
4:30-4:45pm EST			
4:45-5:00pm EST			
5:00-5:15pm EST			
5:15-5:30pm EST			
5:30-5:45pm EST			
5:45-6:00pm EST			

2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium Tracks
Daily Openings, Virtual Happy Hours, Symposium Closing
Welcoming Remarks + Keynote
Data Sharing
Practical Methods and Application
Innovation
Training
COVID
NSSP Community of Practice

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Day 3 – Thursday, November 19, 2020

1:00-1:15pm EST	Daily Opening, Logistics, Overview				
1:15-1:30pm EST	Plenary: NSSP and the Federal COVID Response				
1:30-1:45pm EST					
1:45-2:00pm EST	Plenary Panel: Syndromic Surveillance during a National Emergency - the State and Local Experience				
2:00-2:15pm EST					
2:15-2:30pm EST					
2:30-2:45pm EST	...BREAK...				
2:45-3:00pm EST	Breakout: COVID Syndrome Definition Update	Roundtable: Data Integration to Monitor COVID Vaccine Rollout	Roundtable: Data Quality and COVID	Demo/Technical Walkthrough: Analytic Innovations for the COVID Response - RShiny Dashboard	
3:00-3:15pm EST					
3:15-3:30pm EST					
3:30-3:45pm EST	...BREAK...				
3:45-4:00pm EST	Who We Are and Where We're Going - NSSP Community of Practice Participation and Strategic Framework				
4:00-4:15pm EST					
4:15-4:30pm EST	Ongoing Activities - NSSP Community of Practice Subcommittee, Workgroup, and User Group Updates				
4:30-4:45pm EST					
4:45-5:00pm EST	Looking Ahead - Engaging in the NSSP Community of Practice Moving Forward				
5:00-5:15pm EST	Symposium Closing Session				
5:15-5:30pm EST					
5:30-5:45pm EST					
5:45-6:00pm EST					
			2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium Tracks		
			Daily Openings, Virtual Happy Hours, Symposium Closing		
			Welcoming Remarks + Keynote		
			Data Sharing		
			Practical Methods and Application		
			Innovation		
			Training		
			COVID		
			NSSP Community of Practice		

Appendix B – Daily Agendas Annotated with Session Recordings and Slides

Day 1 – Tuesday, November 17, 2020

OPENING REMARKS AND KEYNOTE

Daily Open, Logistics, and Overview

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Charlie Ishikawa, MSPH
Kahuina Consulting, LLC
President & Principal Consultant

Welcoming Remarks

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Speakers:

- CAPT Loren Rodgers, Ph.D. – CDC/NSSP, Acting National Syndromic Surveillance Program Lead
- Krystal Collier, BA – Arizona Department of Health Services, NSSP CoP Core Committee Chair
- Yushiuan Chen, MPH – Tri-County Health Department (Colorado), NSSP CoP Core Committee Deputy Chair
- Hayleigh McCall, MPH – CSTE, 2020 Syndromic Surveillance Symposium Staff Lead

Keynote Address: Exploring the Past, Present, and Future of Public Health Surveillance

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Janet Hamilton, MPH
Executive Director
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)

BLOCK 1

Training: NSSP ESSENCE 101

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Training

Description: An orientation for new users including 1) a brief introduction to syndromic surveillance and the NSSP and 2) an NSSP-ESSENCE step-by-step live demonstration highlighting how to navigate the tool and run, save, and share a query.

Trainer: Wayne Loschen, MS – Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHUAPL)

Additional Speaker: Aaron Kite-Powell, MS – CDC/NSSP

Breakout: Spike, Alert, GO!

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Practical Methods and Application

Description: Learn about experiences determining, setting, and utilizing syndromic surveillance alerts for public health action.

Moderator: Anna Frick, MPH – Alaska Department of Health and Human Services

Presenters:

- Tim Collins, MPH, MS, MA – Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC)
- Kara Manchester, MS – Ohio Department of Health
- Sindu Shamasunder, MPH + Hailey Hartman, MPH – North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
- Howard Burkom, Ph.D.– Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHUAPL)

Breakout: Data Access and Integration

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Innovation

Description: Hear how APIs can be used to access and integrate other data sources with syndromic data.

Moderator: Caleb Wiedeman, MPH – Tennessee Department of Health

Presenters:

- Sara Chronister, MPH – Maricopa County Department of Public Health (Arizona)
- Josh Love, MPH – Metro Public Health Department (Nashville-Davidson County, Tennessee)

Breakout: Successful State-led Data Sharing Collaborations

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Data Sharing

Description: Setting the foundation for the day's Data Sharing Track sessions, hear of CDC and CSTE activities that have advanced syndromic data sharing, and examples of successful state-led data sharing collaborations.

Moderators:

- Dave Swenson, MEd, PMP – New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services
- CAPT Loren Rodgers, Ph.D.– CDC/NSSP
- Charlie Ishikawa, MSPH – Kahuina Consulting, LLC

Presenters:

- Charlie Ishikawa, MSPH – Kahuina Consulting, LLC

- CAPT Loren Rodgers, Ph.D. – CDC/NSSP
- Zach Faigen, MSPH, REHS + Mike Dolan Fliss, Ph.D., MPS, MSW – North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
- Veronica Fialkowski, MPH – Vermont Department of Health

Block 2

Lightning: Significant Findings

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Practical Methods and Application

Description: Discover 1) different analyses/statistics to assist in using syndromic data for decision-making and 2) syndromic surveillance alerts and how they can be interpreted to trigger public health action.

Moderator: MisChele Vickers, MPA – Alabama Department of Public Health

Presenters:

- MisChele Vickers, MPA – Alabama Department of Public Health
- Ami Gandhi, MPH – Georgia Department of Public Health
- Diksha Ramnani, MPH – Wisconsin Department of Health Services
- Darcy Phelan-Emrick, DrPH, MHS – Baltimore City Health Department (Maryland)
- Kelley Bemis, MPH – Cook County Department of Public Health (Illinois)

Roundtable: Bringing New Partners to the Table

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Innovation

Description: Discuss 1) approaches to engaging new partners and stakeholders with syndromic surveillance data and 2) methods to utilize new data and partnerships to address public health concerns.

Moderator: LT Kathleen Hartnett, Ph.D., MPH – CDC/NSSP

Invited Panelists:

- Alexander Senetcky, MPH – Connecticut Department of Public Health
- Grace Marx, MD, MPH – CDC/Division of Vector-Borne Diseases
- Marc Paladini, MPH – New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Stephanie Dietz, Ph.D, MSc – CDC/NSSP
- Jamaal Russell, DrPH, MPH – Contractor DoD/Armed Forces Health Surveillance Division

Breakout: Can I Share That? Ask the Lawyers.

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Data Sharing

Description: Hear varying perspectives on 1) the legal framework that applies to sharing public health surveillance data, 2) ways to overcome barriers to sharing data, 3)

approaches to working with privacy officers on data sharing projects, and 4) best practices for working within your jurisdiction on data sharing projects.

Moderator: Deborah Gould, Ph.D., MS – CDC/DHIS

Presenters:

- Rachel Hammond, CIPP/G/US, HCISPP, CIPM – New Jersey Department of Health
- Matthew Penn, JD, MLIS – CDC/Office of Public Health Law Services
- Carrie Waggoner, JD – Network for Public Health Law

BLOCK 3

Training: Custom Syndrome Definition in NSSP ESSENCE

[Recording](#)

Track: Training

Description: Receive instruction on creating a custom syndrome query in NSSP ESSENCE, including information on which data sources to use for validation and analysis and tips to limit processing time.

Trainers:

- Rasneet Kumar, MPH – Tarrant County Public Health (Texas)
- Rosa Ergas, MPH – Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- Zach Stein, MPH – ICF Consultant, CDC/NSSP

Breakout: Match Point – Data Matching Across Sources

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Practical Methods and Application

Description: Hear about multiple methods for matching data across different data sources and systems.

Moderator: Kelley Chester, DrPH, MPH – Thought Bridge, LLC

Presenters:

- Josh Levy, MS – Levy Informatics, LLC + Kelley Chester, DrPH, MPH – Thought Bridge, LLC
- Dana Quesinberry, JD – Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center
- Madison Schaeffer, MS, MPH + Keaton Hughes, MPH + Lori Zigich, MPH – New Mexico Department of Health

Roundtable: Establishing a Public Use Shared Data Set

[Recording](#)

Track: Data Sharing

Description: Discuss and build community consensus on a public HHS-region level syndromic surveillance summary dataset.

Moderator: CAPT Loren Rodgers, Ph.D. – CDC/NSSP

Invited Panelists:

- Zach Faigen, MSPH, REHS – North Carolina Department of Health and Human

Services

- Krystal Collier, BA – Arizona Department of Health Services
- Rob Mathes, MPH – New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Scott McNabb, Ph.D., MS – Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University
- Rachel Hammond, CIPP/G/US, HCISPP, CIPM – New Jersey Department of Health

Day 2 – Wednesday, November 18, 2020

BLOCK 1

Training: Call Up Your Data Using APIs

[Recording](#)

Track: Training

Description: Receive instruction on how to access and utilize NSSP data through APIs.

Trainer: Michael Sheppard, MS – CDC/NSSP

Breakout: Querying from Scratch – Cooking Up New Syndromes

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Practical Methods and Application

Description: Hear about the process of designing a new syndrome definition query, including how surveillance objectives inform query design.

Moderator: Rosa Ergas, MPH – Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Presenters:

- Ashley Hawes, MPH – Austin Public Health (Texas)
- Gabriel Ann Haas, MPH – Kansas Department of Health and Environment
- Catherine Wolff, MS + Danielle Brathwaite, BA – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Training: Data Sharing Step-by-Step Using the AMC

[Recording](#)

Track: Training

Description: Go through step-by-step instructions on how to share data with other jurisdictions through the AMC and discuss how building relationships, defining the purpose of shared-data surveillance and defining AMC data sharing rules are involved in the process.

Trainer: Herbert Okam – Deloitte Consultant, CDC/NSSP

BLOCK 2

Training: Telling Your Story – Insights and Tips to Promote Syndromic Surveillance

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Training

Description: Learn from public health communication experts on identifying and successfully communicating syndromic surveillance success stories.

Trainers:

- Oona Powell, MA – CDC/Division of Health Informatics and Surveillance
- Michael Latham, BBA – CDC/Division of Health Informatics and Surveillance

Breakout: The Art of Surveillance – Data Visualizations

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Practical Methods and Application

Description: Hear about different visualizations used to share syndromic surveillance analyses through engaging dashboards and presentations effectively.

Moderator: Yushiuan Chen, MPH – Tri-County Health Department (Colorado)

Presenters:

- Amanda Dylina Morse, MPH – Washington State Department of Health
- MisChele Vickers, MPA – Alabama Department of Public Health
- Michelle Carr, MPH + Yifang Dang, MS – Houston Health Department (Texas)

Lightning: New Tactics for Old Problems

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Innovation

Description: Learn about examples of new ways to apply syndromic surveillance to public health problems.

Moderators:

- Bill Smith, MS – Maricopa County Department of Public Health (Arizona)
- Fatema Mamou, MPH – Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Presenters:

- Amy Ising, MSIS – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Sandra Gonzalez, Ph.D., MPH – Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
- James Muncy, MPH – South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
- Dave Atrubin, MPH – Florida Department of Health
- Lakshmi Radhakrishnan, MPH – CDC/NSSP
- Zach Stein, MPH – ICF Consultant, CDC/NSSP

Block 3

Training: Dashboard Creation in NSSP ESSENCE

[Recording](#)

Track: Training

Description: Walk step-by-step through a demonstration of myESSENCE dashboard functionalities.

Trainer: Amanda Dylina Morse, MPH – Washington State Department of Health

Breakout: Making the Best of a SyS Situation – Data Quality for Syndromic Surveillance
[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Practical Methods and Application

Description: Learn different methods for identifying and interpreting varying data quality elements.

Moderator: Harold Gil, MSPH – Washington State Department of Health

Presenters:

- Dave Atrubin, MPH – Florida Department of Health
- Viacony Herzi, MPH, MLS(ASCP)^{CM} – Maricopa County Department of Public Health (Arizona) + Sasha Harb, MPH – Pima County Health Department (Arizona)
- PJ Gibson, BS – Indiana Department of Health

Roundtable: COVID, Current Events, and More – Discussing Syndromic Surveillance Practices in 2020

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: Innovation

Description: Discuss definitions and/or other SyS activities regarding protests, police-involved shootings, COVID race inequalities, health equity, etc.

Moderator: Jim Nowicki, MBA – GDIT

Invited Panelists: Arden Norfleet, MPH – Virginia Department of Health

Day 3 – Thursday, November 19, 2020

PLENARIES

Plenary: NSSP and the Federal COVID Response

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Paula W. Yoon, ScD, MPH

Director, Division of Health Informatics and Surveillance
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Plenary Panel: Syndromic Surveillance during a National Emergency – the State and Local Experience

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Moderator: Charlie Ishikawa, MSPH – Kahuina Consulting, LLC

Panelists:

- Natasha Close, Ph.D., MPH – Washington State Department of Health
- Scott Hutton, Ph.D., MPH – Idaho Division of Public Health
- Stacey Hoferka Jensen, MPH, MSIS – Illinois Department of Public Health
- Rob Mathes, MPH – New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

BLOCK 1

Breakout: COVID Syndrome Definition Update

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: COVID (COVID Track 1 RingCentral Space)

Description: Hear and discuss 1) updates to the national COVID syndrome definition, 2) information being considered by CDC about the definition, and 3) jurisdictional experiences refining the COVID definition for specific surveillance purposes.

Moderators/Presenters:

- Amanda Smith, Ph.D., MPH – CDC/NSSP (EIS Officer)
- Zach Stein, MPH – ICF Consultant, CDC/NSSP
- Michael Sheppard, MS – CDC/NSSP

Roundtable: Data Integration to Monitor COVID Vaccine Rollout

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: COVID (COVID Track 2 RingCentral Space)

Description: Discuss how NSSP data, adverse event data, poison control data, and other sources can be leveraged for rapid analysis to identify potential issues from the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines.

Moderator: Jim Nowicki, MBA – GDIT

Roundtable: Data Quality and COVID

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Track: COVID (COVID Track 3 RingCentral Space)

Description: Discuss the unique data quality challenges identified or exposure during the COVID response.

Moderators:

- Diksha Ramnani, MPH – Wisconsin Department of Health Services
- Jamie Smimble, MPH – CDC/NSSP
- Lakshmi Radhakrishnan, MPH – CDC/NSSP

Invited Panelist: Stephanie Dietz, Ph.D., MSc – CDC/NSSP

Demo/Technical Walkthrough: Analytic Innovations for the COVID Response – R Shiny Dashboard

[Recording](#)

Track: COVID (COVID Track 4 RingCentral Space)

Description: Participate in a demonstration, and technical (i.e., code) walkthrough of the R Shiny Dashboard created for the COVID response.

Demonstrators:

- Aaron Kite-Powell, MS – CDC/NSSP
- Douglas Wirtz, MS – ICF Consultant, CDC/NSSP

NSSP COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (CoP) SESSIONS

Who We Are and Where We're Going – NSSP CoP Participation and Strategic Framework

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Moderator: Charlie Ishikawa, MSPH – Kahuina Consulting, LLC

Presenters:

- Deborah Gould Ph.D., MS – CDC/DHIS, NSSP CoP Technical Monitor
- Krystal Collier, BA – Arizona Department of Health Services, NSSP CoP Core Committee Chair
- Yushuan Chen, MPH – Tri-County Health Department (Colorado), NSSP CoP Core Committee Deputy Chair
- Hayleigh McCall, MPH – CSTE, NSSP CoP Staff Lead

Ongoing Activities – NSSP CoP Subcommittee, Workgroup, and User Group Updates

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Moderator: Charlie Ishikawa, MSPH – Kahuina Consulting, LLC

Presenters: NSSP CoP Core Committee Representatives and Workgroup Co-Chairs

Looking Ahead – Engaging with the NSSP CoP Moving Forward

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Moderator: Charlie Ishikawa, MSPH – Kahuina Consulting, LLC

Presenters:

- Deborah Gould, Ph.D., MS – CDC/DHIS, NSSP CoP Technical Monitor
- Krystal Collier, BA – Arizona Department of Health Services, NSSP CoP Core Committee Chair
- Yushiuan Chen, MPH – Tri-County Health Department (Colorado), NSSP CoP Core Committee Deputy Chair
- Hayleigh McCall, MPH – CSTE, NSSP CoP Staff Lead

SYMPOSIUM CLOSE

Symposium Closing Session

[Recording](#) / [Slides](#)

Charlie Ishikawa, MSPH
Kahuina Consulting, LLC
President & Principal Consultant