

Local Health Departments Rely on Federal Funding to Prepare for and Respond to Emergencies

Local health departments take the lead in preparing communities for disasters, responding when emergencies occur, and helping communities to recover. Local health departments work with all community sectors—emergency management, first responders, health care providers, government agencies and officials, business, education, faith-based and service groups—so that when disaster strikes, everyone is prepared. Significant budget cuts to public health and emergency management federal grant programs have made local health security and safety more vulnerable than in the past.

To ensure the public's safety, NACCHO recommends:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

*Figures include Working Capital Fund

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grants

FY2014 \$640 million | **FY2015 President** \$617 million

FY2015 NACCHO Request: \$675 million

Public health emergency preparedness funding is awarded to 50 state, 8 U.S. territory and 4 metropolitan health departments to bolster their ability to effectively respond to emergencies including terrorist attacks, infectious disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological incidents. These grants have been cut more than 33 percent since FY2004. More than 55 percent of local health departments rely solely on federal funding for emergency preparedness activities.

Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, HHS

Hospital Preparedness Program

FY2014 \$255 million | **FY2015 President:** \$255 million

FY2015 NACCHO Request: \$300 million

Through the Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP), local health departments partner with hospitals and other providers to ensure that the health care system at the community level is prepared to respond to any emergency, including floods, hurricanes, or wildfires and train for a potential influenza pandemic or terrorist attack. In FY2014, HPP was cut by \$100 million, which resulted in a 54% cut since FY2004. This reduction is of great concern to local health departments as it will erode medical preparedness nationwide.

Office of the Surgeon General

Medical Reserve Corps

FY2014: \$9 million | **FY2015 President:** \$9 million

FY2015 NACCHO Request: \$11 million

The Medical Reserve Corps is a national network of local volunteers that responds to local needs and works to strengthen their locale's public health infrastructure and preparedness capabilities. In many communities, these trained volunteer professionals provide critical disaster and public health services to ensure the protection and health of their jurisdiction.



Since all disasters strike locally, local health departments are a critical part of any community's first response to disease outbreaks, emergencies, and acts of terrorism.

National Health Security is achieved when the Nation and its people are prepared for, protected from, respond effectively to, and able to recover from incidents with potentially negative health consequences.

- HHS National Health Security Strategy December 2009

Local Health Departments Protect the Public

Local health departments play a vital role in maintaining National Health Security. They perform the following functions to ensure the safety and well-being of America's communities in the face of potential public health emergencies:

Preparedness

- Develop comprehensive disaster plans in collaboration with community partners.
- Provide specialized training and exercises of local health and emergency response personnel to quickly receive, store, stage, distribute, and dispense Strategic National Stockpile assets and other lifesaving medical countermeasures.
- Identify and prepare populations that may be at higher risk for adverse health outcomes.

Protection

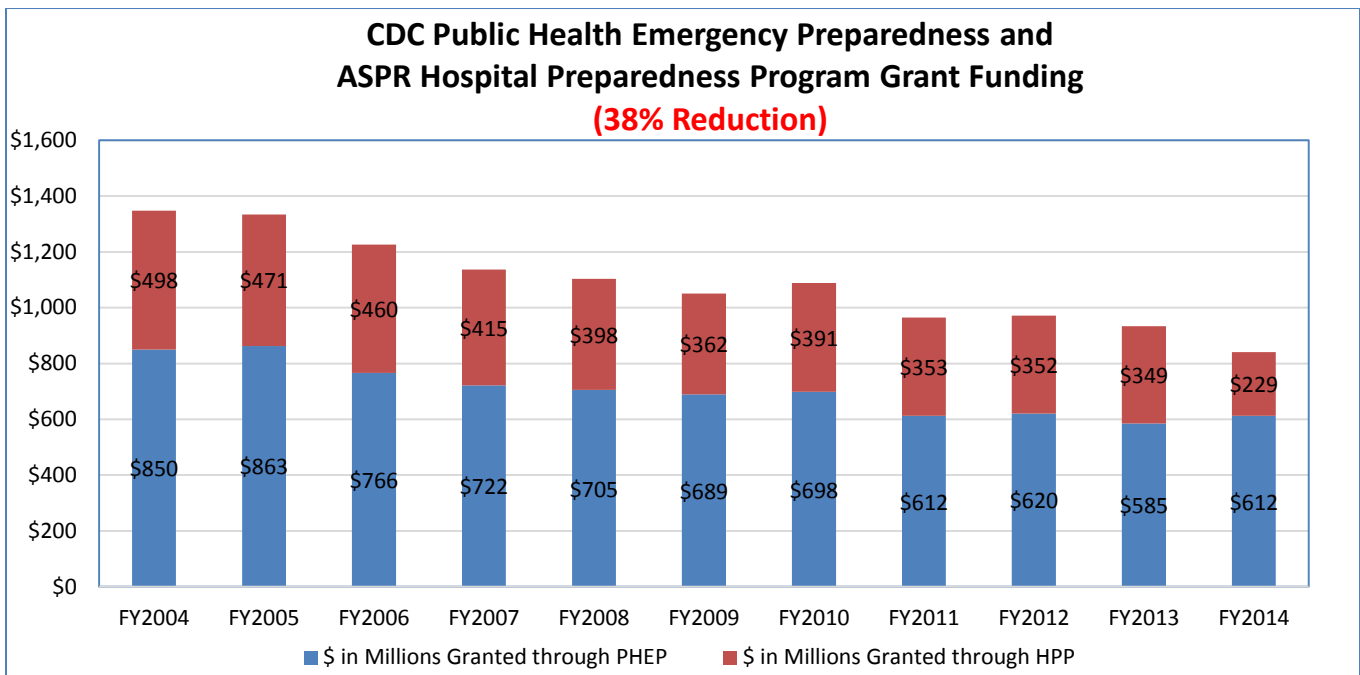
- Maintain laboratory systems with a capacity for 24/7 receipt of potentially hazardous specimens and the capability to screen and test for a broad range of public health threats.
- Provide immunizations for expected and unexpected public health incidents such as the H1N1 flu virus, foodborne disease outbreaks and other infectious diseases such as measles, smallpox, and anthrax.

Response

- Identify necessity for medical surge and prepare healthcare providers to treat victims.
- Mobilize and coordinate volunteer public health and healthcare professionals.

Recovery

- Issue interim guidance to the public on risk and protective actions.
- Prepare for evacuation, repatriation and receipt of evacuees from sites of incidents.



The **National Association of County and City Health Officials** is the voice of the approximately 2,800 local health departments across the country. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to ensure the security of our nation through preparedness and the safety of the water we drink, the food we eat, and the air we breathe. For more information, go to www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/.

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