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IFPTI Fellowship Cohort IV:
Research Presentation
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2014-2015



*Factors Influencing Multi-Jurisdictional
Collaboration Within State Food Emergency
Rapid Response Teams (RRTs)*

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Funding for this program was made possible, in part, by the Food and Drug Administration through grant 5U54FD004324-04; views expressed in written materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does any mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organization imply endorsement by the United States Government.

Background

- Currently 18 federal/state Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) under U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Cooperative Agreement
- “Original” RRT states joined in 2008/2009
- “New” RRT states joined in 2012
- Housed in state regulatory agencies



Image Source: <http://www.fda.gov/>

Background (continued)

- Teams intended to improve integrated responses to food and feed emergencies:
 - Extensive collaboration between stakeholders due to jurisdiction, expertise, resources, etc.
- States granted high level of flexibility in team development:
 - Unique operating structure/culture.
 - Challenging to create universal “best practices” on successful collaboration strategies.
 - Current documents provide solid foundation; specific successes, barriers, and strategies yet to be captured.

Problem Statement

- There is limited information on a national level that characterizes successes, barriers, and strategies pertaining to multi-jurisdictional collaboration for current RRTs functioning in diverse operational and jurisdictional frameworks.

Research Questions

1. What multi-jurisdictional collaboration successes have the current RRTs experienced?
2. What collaboration barriers have the current RRTs experienced?
3. What strategies were implemented to address and resolve barriers to multi-jurisdictional collaboration?
4. How have strategies for multi-jurisdictional collaboration within RRTs evolved over time?

Methodology

**Contact
RRT
Program
Directors/
Managers**

**Online
Interest
Survey
with
Option to
Include
Other RRT
Members**

**Structured
Telephone
Interviews**

**Delphi
Method
Face-to-
Face
Feedback
Group**

**Transcribe
Interviews**

**Qualitative
Data
Analysis**

Study Population

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Interviewed RRTs

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Creation Date		
2008/2009 ("Original" RRT)	9	50
2012 ("New" RRT)	9	50
Grantee Agency		
State Dept. of Health (or equivalent)	9	50
State Dept. of Agriculture (or equivalent)	9	50
Local Health Jurisdictional Structure*		
Centralized	6	35
Decentralized	11	65

*One RRT did not specify

Results

Collaboration Success Themes:

- Increased familiarity among response partners.
- Increased familiarity surrounding the capabilities of RRTs.
- RRTs that routinely communicate with their partners have experienced the institutionalization of collaboration into the agency's operating culture.

Results (continued)

Success Barriers:

- The perception of “turf” and the unwillingness to relinquish control during food/feed emergency response activities.
 - Perception that RRT is going to assume command.
- Restrictions on information sharing between local, state, and federal response partners.
- Lack of dedicated RRT staff to liaise and share best practices with partner jurisdictions.

Results (continued)

Barrier Reduction Strategies:

- Persistent communication with partners to catalyze institutionalization of collaboration into agency culture.
- Meet with partners face-to-face to increase familiarity and build personal relationships.
- Assign dedicated RRT staff to work exclusively on team development, relationship-building, and serving as a liaison to partner agencies.
- Obtain leadership buy-in by marketing RRTs' multi-jurisdictional capacities.

Strategies for Successful Collaboration



Conclusions

- Common themes identified related to multi-jurisdictional collaboration successes, barriers, and strategies experienced by the 18 current RRTs.
- Themes could be further categorized into five factors that may influence the success of multi-jurisdictional collaboration.
- When considered together, these factors may be able to build upon existing best practices to allow multi-jurisdictional teams the ability to increase their collaboration successes.

Recommendations

1. Maintain *persistent* communication with response partners to institutionalize multi-jurisdictional collaboration into agency culture.
2. Meet face-to-face *prior* to an emergency response to:
 - Increase familiarity.
 - Build personal relationships.
 - Increase awareness around each jurisdiction's capabilities and limitations.
 - Better defined advantages that a multi-jurisdictional RRT structure can bring to a response.

Recommendations (continued)

- Establish permanent, dedicated RRT personnel to work on outreach and serve as a familiar liaison between partners.
- Work to establish leadership buy-in through marketing of team's multi-jurisdictional capabilities.
 - Find champions among the executive leadership.
- Repeat process with federal and local partners to capture their perspectives.

Acknowledgements

- Washington State Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Consumer Services Division
- Fellowship in Food Protection of the International Food Protection Training Institute (IFPTI)
- Current RRTs
- R.D. (Dan) Sowards, Fellowship Mentor
- Paul Dezendorf, Ph.D., Research Subject Matter Expert
- Cohort IV Fellows
- Amanda Smith-Treadwell, MA, CCC-SLP

Questions?

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Quotes on Collaboration Successes

“It’s strange, but it has become the culture...you work with FDA, it’s just what you do, why wouldn’t you? They can help you in some circumstances and in others we can help them.”

-Interviewee 005

“I think we have tried to train together, to get the staff to know each other, try to help each other understand what the other does and why they are important to the process, and it seems to be working.”

-Interviewee 004

“I think one of the things that has been very valuable is that we meet on a quarterly basis so the players know each other. The members of the RRT understand what each group brings to the table, their abilities, and their capabilities. We’ve also developed an updated contact list so that we’re able to reach out more easily. We’ve built this working relationship where you understand who you’re reaching out to, who to reach out to, and they are much more receptive because they understand who’s calling.”

-Interviewee 006



Quotes on Collaboration Barriers

“I think the big thing is it’s rough letting go. You have to be able to let go enough to trust the relationship is going to work so we can build the bridge in the first place. So you do include those people in various groups. You give them a say, you reach out to them.”

–Interviewee 003

“The federal government still has its requirements to have everybody commissioned or under a 20.88 agreement, which I understand the need for, but there still seems to be some lagging hesitancy to accept or recognize that we have to be equal partners. There is still some information that doesn’t necessarily make its way to us as a state agency....”

-Interviewee 017

“It’s essential that you have someone who is focused on being able to make that their task rather than another job responsibility in a very full schedule. I’m really concerned. I think things have gone really well...but we need dedicated staff and funding to have this progression continue to support our RRT on an ongoing basis.”

–Interviewee 006

Quotes on Collaboration Strategies

“Face-to-face meetings, I think, are really important because you get to know people and build relationships so you feel comfortable picking up the phone and talking to them....With the RRT, by focusing on relationship-building, it gives us intent to bring us all back into a shared operational picture.”

-Interviewee 009

“It’s strange, but it has become the culture...you work with FDA, it’s just what you do, why wouldn’t you? They can help you in some circumstances and in others we can help them.”

-Interviewee 005

“I think the other piece that is absolutely essential is having key staff assigned to this from a day-in and day-out basis, so that it’s not someone else’s one of forty other hats they wear....”

-Interviewee 004



Six Steps for Qualitative Data Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

1. Familiarize yourself with the data: transcribe, read, and listen to interviews.
2. Generate initial codes.
3. Search for themes.
4. Review themes.
5. Define/name themes.
6. Produce the report.



Semi-Structured Interview Questions (Slide 1 of 3)

- In what year did your team join the national RRT program?
- Which areas of food safety expertise are housed within your agency (e.g., epidemiology, lab, manufactured and retail food, feed, etc.)?
- Who are the primary partner agencies and/or programs in your RRT?
- Which of your RRTs' primary partner agencies and/or programs are housed under the same regulatory structure?
- Describe the relationship between your state's local health jurisdictions and your state's primary health agency.

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Semi-Structured Interview Questions (Slide 2 of 3)

- What successes has your agency had with respect to multi-jurisdictional collaboration?
- What measures or practices do you feel contributed to this success?
- What specific barriers have you encountered related to multi-jurisdictional collaboration when developing and maintaining your team?
- Around which topics did these barriers center?
- If you feel your RRT has overcome these barriers, what strategies did you use to successfully address and resolve them?

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Semi-Structured Interview Questions (Slide 3 of 3)

- What do you consider the *most effective* strategy your state has implemented when overcoming barriers to multi-jurisdictional collaboration?
- What specific *collaboration* obstacles do you feel still exist in your RRT that may be hampering progress towards achieving specific cooperative agreement milestones?
- How have your strategies for successful collaboration changed with time in your attempts to maximize effective collaboration among your RRT partners?