Session 1: Sources of EBS Hotlines

+ This session is expected to cover different types of sources for EBS hotlines

Session Content

Information for EBS hotlines is gathered from the public whereby any community member can detect and report signals of public health emergence for early warning and rapid response

Dedicated number and/or social media accounts should be

Module 5: Hotlines

EBS Hotline refers to a specialised data capture service through telephone, SMS or other direct messaging platforms that provides an effective way to listen/ read and respond to public health emergencies
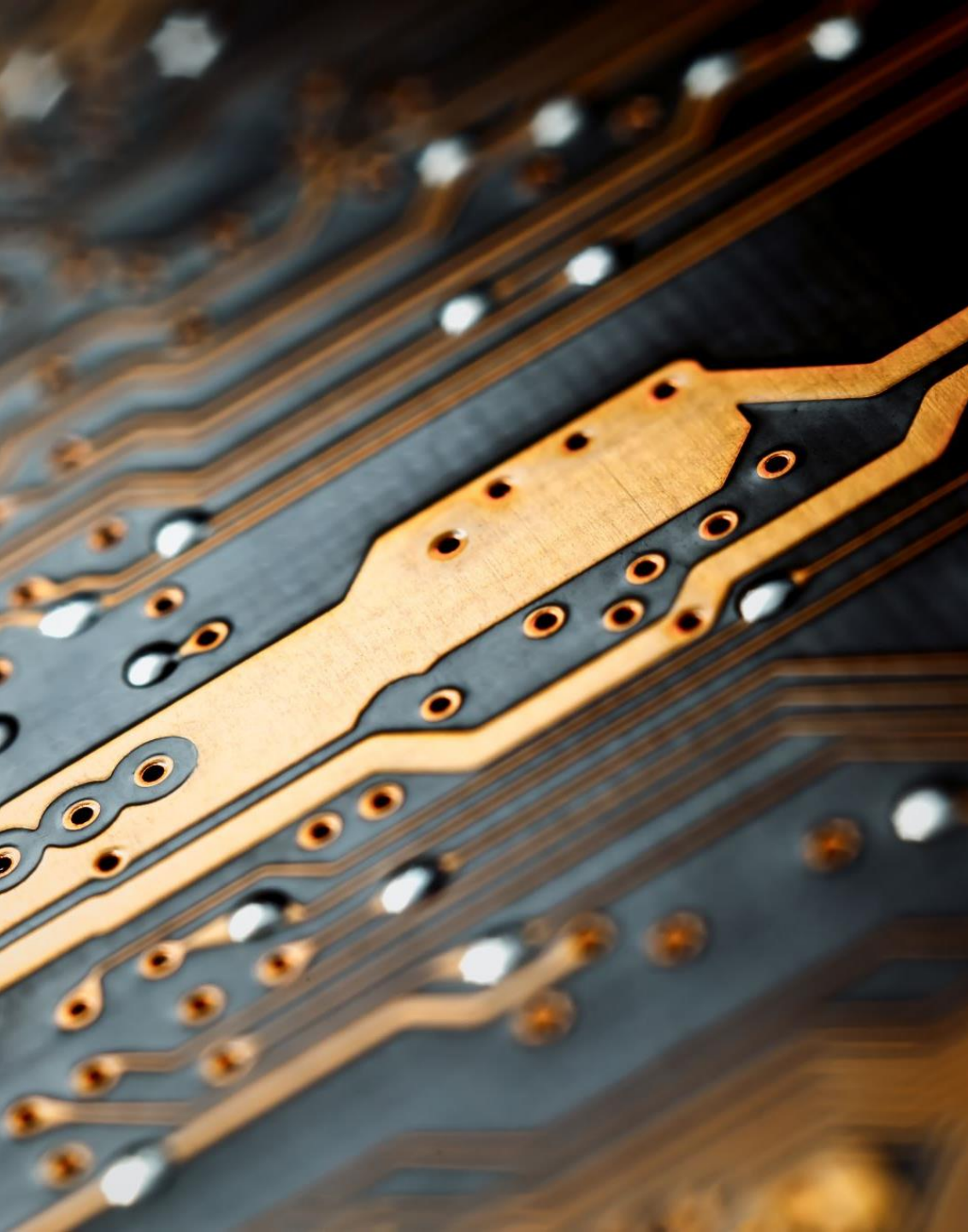
Within EBS, a hotline can be used to capture signals reported by the community or health facility

It provides a wide range of users to report unusual public health emergencies

Module content

Module Duration: This module will take 20 minutes to complete

Learning objective

Describe the sources of EBS hotlines

Understand how to establish EBS hotlines

Understand the steps for conducting Hotline EBS

Learning objective

+ Understand stakeholders' roles and responsibilities

Event Based Surveillance is the organised approach to the detection and reporting of 'signals,' defined as information that may represent events of public health importance, often through channels outside of routine surveillance systems

EBS Hotlines is a platform for gathering information from the public whereby any community member can detect and report signals of public health emergence for early warning and rapid response via calls or direct SMS or in person

Session 1: Sources of EBS Hotlines

+ This session is expected to cover different types of sources for EBS hotlines

Session Content

+ Calls from the general public or health facilities

+ SMS from the general public or health facilities

Session Summary

+ Different sources for EBS hotline include calls and SMS from general public

Session 2: Establishing EBS hotline

+ In this session, establishment of EBS hotlines process will be covered

Session Content

Setting up a hotline centre is a daunting task, there are a myriad of options for hotline centre technology

Whether a Member State wants to build or reassess its hotline centre requirements, technology considerations should include the core platform and workforce optimization software

Minimum

Trained personnel inclusive of risk communication techniques

Dedicated contact number and social media handle

Office space

Desktop Computers: Each agent should be equipped with a personal desktop for management of operations, data storage and customer references – even if everything is stored on the cloud

Telephone with landline

FAQ or reference book for operators to consult when communicating with callers

Additional

USB Headsets with in-built microphone component

Call recording software/device

Automatic call distribution system: technology automatically routes calls to phone agents based upon organisational rules

Hotline management information system: that will be used to track your calls and the services and advice provided to callers

Event management system : will be used to capture, track, analyse, and retrieve all signals and events detected

The number should be short and toll free

It is recommended to have a single number that can be used as a hotline to make reporting easy to remember

Community residents should be motivated to self-report events that may impact the public's health, including emerging public health events or outbreaks

Additional

Disseminate the hotline number by advocacy through health authorities, community health workers, non-governmental organizations, religious and other leaders, or schools and also advertise through messaging in local languages by TV, radio and newspapers

Develop partnership with communication companies that can spread the hotline number by test messages to their clients

The Call methodology

The responder to the call should start by greeting and thanking them for their proactivity to report to the ministry of health or relevant ministry hosting the hotline, concerning potential public health events

Then the responder should follow a prepared set of questions that directly reflect the questions posed in the alert logbook

The call should be ended by thanking the caller for their time, patience and proactivity

The responder should directly register in the signal logbook the signals that meet the pre-defined list of signals

Calls should be returned as soon as possible in situations where a call is interrupted or disconnected or if calls are received while the responder is busy; this will ensure that all signals are collected

The Messaging methodology

Once an SMS or a social media message is received, an instant automated message should greet the sender, thank them and state that an operator will contact them

Automated questions or responders can collect information from the sender

Data should be registered directly in the alert logbook according to the pre-defined list of signals for the country

Information about the sender should be collected for further communication and details about the signals reported

At the national level: The hotline with the call respondents can be established at the National Public Health Emergency Operation Centre to capture and register signals from the entire country

The Messaging methodology

+ At the regional/provincial and district levels: The hotline can be established at the Regional/Provincial Health Authorities premises or at the Regional/Provincial PHEOC if available to capture and register signals from the region/province

The Messaging methodology

HOW TO ESTABLISH AND OPERATE EBS HOTLINES

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN MANAGEMENT OF EBS HOTLINE

IN THIS SESSION YOU HAVE LEARNT

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ESTABLISHING A HOTLINE INCLUDE AN OFFICE, TRAINED PERSONNEL, DEDICATED CONTACT NUMBER

Session 3: Steps for conducting EBS hotline

+ Introduction: In this session, steps for conducting EBS Hotlines will be covered

+ Session content: Information is initially captured as a signal through calls, SMS or direct messaging, which represents a potential acute risk to human health, such as an outbreak

Step 1: Signal Detection

+ Trust: Hotlines require trust from both the community and public health institution

+ Response oriented, community-led: The hotline should be communityled and response oriented

+ Emotional intelligence: Hotline operators are expected to respond to calls from the community who are feeling strong emotions like fear, anger, or stress

+ Evidence-based: Hotline operators should be knowledgeable about the various disease-related and other public health events that they may be asked about in order to accurately address the public's concerns

Step 1: Signal Detection

Calls

Messaging

In Person Reports

People who are conversant with the physical location of the call centre may opt to walk in and make in-person reports of public health threats

However, it is not advisable to come in contact with these persons, they might be carriers of an infectious disease

Step 2: Triaging

+ The objective of triaging raw information is to minimise analysis of duplicate or irrelevant signals and limit unnecessary verification of irrelevant signals, as well as to ensure that genuine events will elicit an effective response

+ The triage of raw EBS information can be divided into two steps: filtering and selection

Step 3: Verification

Verification is an essential step in establishing the validity of the signal

Verification should be done at the local level nearest to the location of the signal

The following are the steps for verification

Step 4: Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment is a systematic process for gathering, assessing, and documenting information to assign a risk level to a public health event

Risk assessment is conducted after the validation of a signal as an event

This should take place within 48 hours of the detection of the signal

Hazard Assessment

This refers to the identification of the characteristics of a public health hazard and the associated adverse health effects

Hazards can include biological, chemical, radiological and nuclear events

The assessment process includes

Exposure Assessment

This refers to the evaluation of the exposure of individuals and populations to likely hazards

The key output of the assessment is an estimate of the

number of people or groups known or likely to have been exposed, and

Context Assessment

This refers to the evaluation of the environment in which the event is taking place

The hazard, exposure and context assesments help to estimate the potential consequences of the event

All types of consequences should be considered in addition to the expected morbidity and mortality, long-term health consequences, and social, economic, environmental and policy consequences

Session Summary

+ Detection
+ Triaging
+ Verification
+ Risk assessment
+ Risk Assessment
+ Consequences
+ Response
+ Action Mapping

Session 4: Stakeholders' roles and responsibilities

Session Introduction: In this session, roles of EBS stakeholders' roles and responsibilities in EBS hotlines will be covered

Session Content: The success of the hotline is based on the early detection and immediate notification of signals

Session summary

Key stakeholders for EBS hotline are hotlines operators, disease surveillance officers and the community

There are primary and supportive roles for each EBS hotlines stakeholders

Session 5: Flow of Information in Hotline EBS

Session Introduction: This session is expected to covers flow of information for EBS hotlines

Session content: This refers to the movement of public health data between the different levels of EBS

Session Summary

+ EBS flow of information refers to the movement of public health data between the different levels of EBS