

Emerging Infections, Outbreak Investigations, and the Role of Public Health

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Legal Framework

Objectives

- Describe legal framework for disease surveillance, investigation, and response
- Review outbreak surveillance data and trends over time
- Discuss emerging infections & specific healthcare-associated pathogens
- Discuss role of Public Health in infection prevention and outbreak response
- · Describe the 10 steps of an outbreak investigation



Public Health: Legal Framework

- Public Health Laws and Rules:
 - General Statutes
 - NC Administrative Code rules
- Health Director's Authority (State & Local)
 - Surveillance
 - Investigation
 - Control Measures



Public Health Law

General Statutes §130A-144: Investigation and Control Measures

(a) The local health director shall investigate... cases of communicable diseases and communicable conditions reported to the local health director

(b) Physicians, persons in charge of medical facilities or laboratories, and other persons shall... permit a local health director or the State Health Director to examine, review, and obtain a copy of medical or other records...

(d) The attending physician shall give control measures... to a patient with a communicable disease or communicable condition and to patients reasonably suspected of being infected or exposed to such a disease or condition.

(e) The local health director shall ensure that control measures... have been given to prevent the spread of all reportable communicable diseases or communicable conditions and any other communicable disease or communicable condition that represents a significant threat to the public health.

(f) All **persons shall comply with control measures**, including submission to examinations and tests...



Public Health Law

10A NCAC 41A .0103: Duties of local health director: report communicable diseases

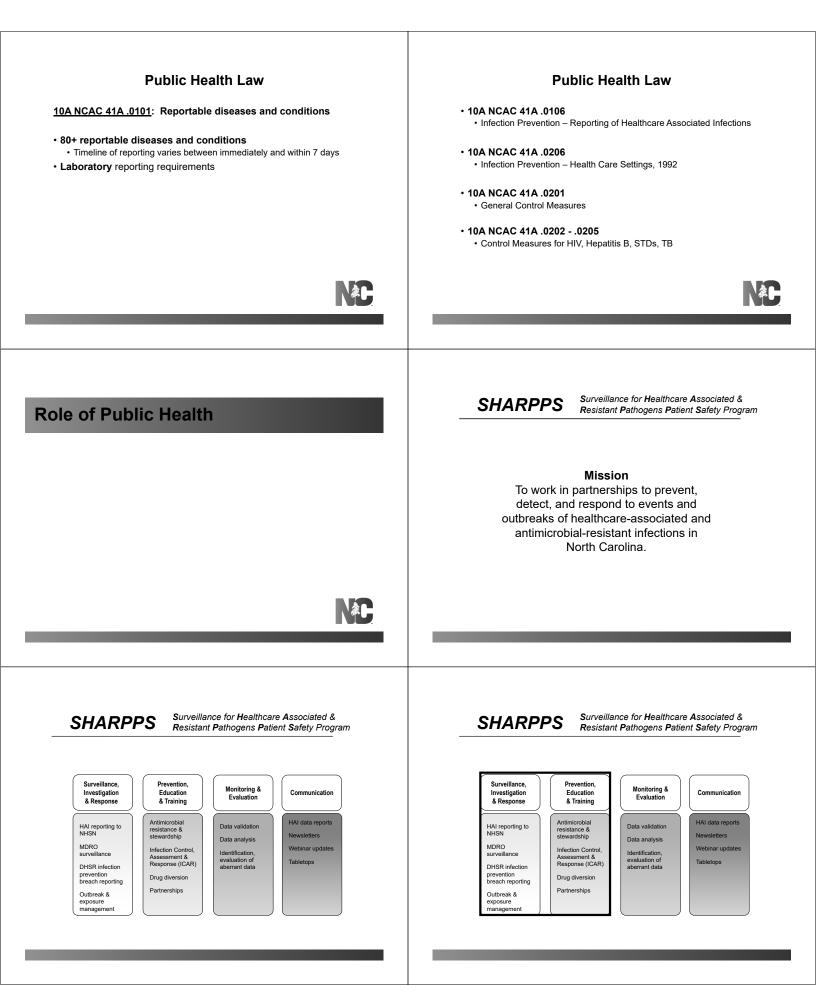
(a) Upon receipt of a report of a communicable disease or condition... the **local health director** shall:

(1) immediately **investigate** the circumstances... [to] include the collection and submission for laboratory examination of specimens necessary to assist in the diagnosis and indicate the duration of control measures;

(2) determine what control measures have been given and ensure that proper control measures... have been given and are being complied with;

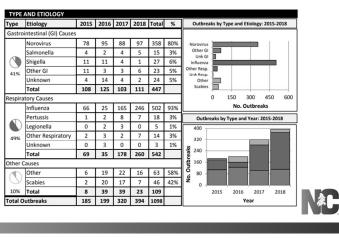
(c) Whenever an **outbreak of a disease or condition** occurs which is not required to be reported... but **which represents a significant threat to the public health**, the local health director shall give appropriate control measures... and **inform the Division of Public Health**



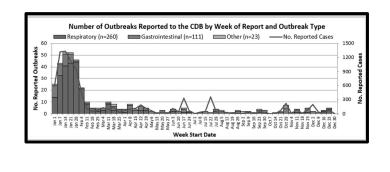


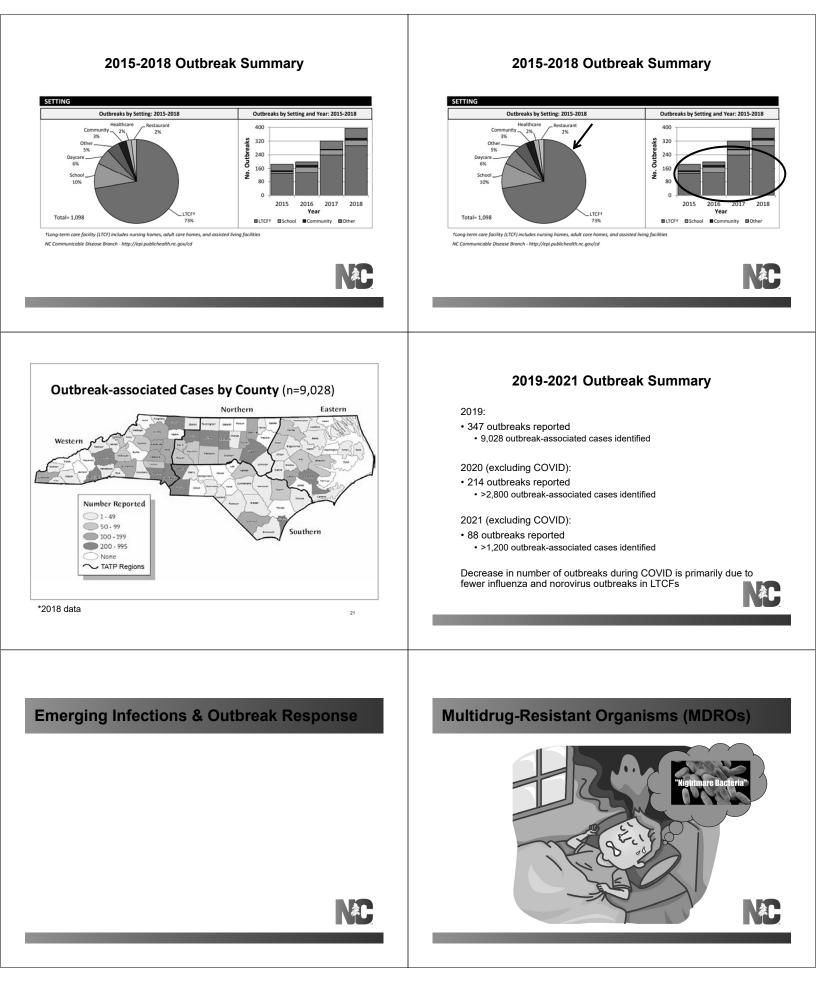
When Should Public Health Be Called? What Happens When Public Health is Called? • HAI reporting questions (i.e., NHSN) Data Review • Reportable diseases / conditions (10A NCAC 41A .0101) • https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/report.html (Form 2124) Clinical Investigation • When <u>any</u> disease is above normal baseline (i.e., an "outbreak") · Environmental Investigation Report suspected infection prevention breach Control Measures · Communication (Patients/Staff/Families/Public) Laboratory Support **Outbreak Assistance Outbreak Summary** We can assist with: • Determining if it is an outbreak · Guidance, tools, and onsite support · Facilitating and coordinating calls with partners • Written recommendations

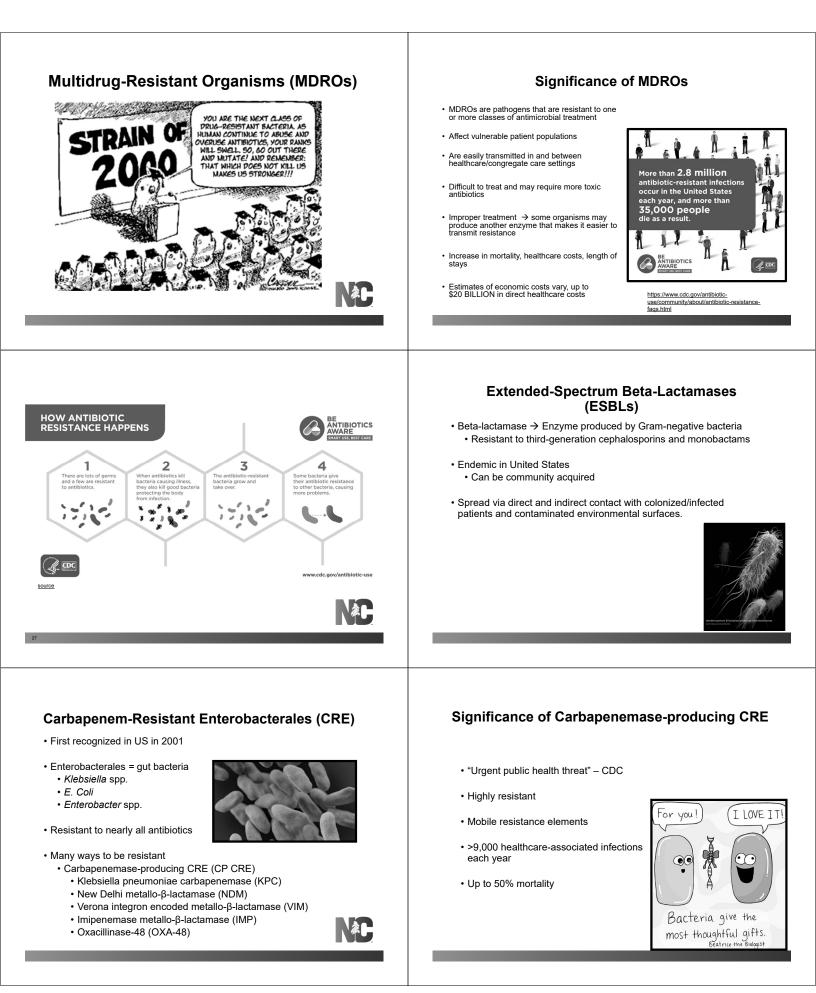
2015-2018 Outbreak Summary



2015-2018 Outbreak Summary







Investigation

- Notified by LHD on April 21, 2017 (a Friday!)
 - Increase in the number infections caused by ESBLproducing organisms among patients admitted to local hospital between October 16, 2016 and April 13 2017
- Majority of cases were residents of three long-term care facilities (LTCFs)
- Coordinated an investigation to assess infection prevention practices among these LTCFs and prevent further intraand inter- facility spread of disease

New onset ESBL and CRE cases among local

hospital ED visits and admissions

14

12 10

Number of Cases



 4 cases were discussed on Friday but > 40 positive labs were waiting for us on Monday morning!



Outbreak Case Definition

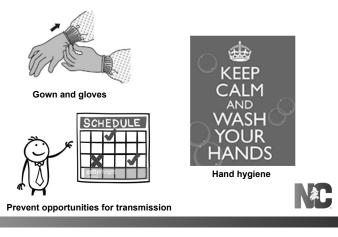
Identification of new* CRE or ESBL infection or colonization in a resident of county D County with a specimen collection date on or after October 1, 2016.

*Different organisms/species/carbapenemases identified in a single resident counted as separate events from other organisms/species/carbapenemases



Initial Control Measures

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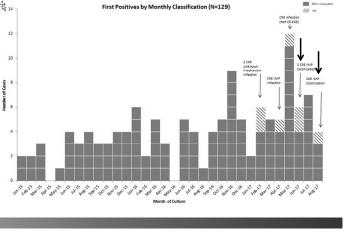


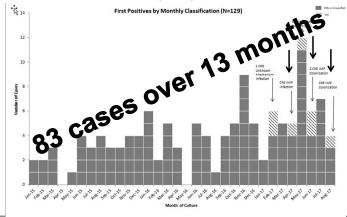
Investigate to stop transmission & prevent future outbreaks





Major Findings Site Visit: Control Measures 1. Staff education • Hand hygiene: inconsistent 2. Laboratory notification ·Wound care: reusing scissors, interruptions in 3. Cohort infected residents flow from clean to dirty 4. Contact precautions for colonized and infected individuals at •OT/PT: contact precautions not adequately higher risk for transmission maintained, lack of dedicated equipment 5. Hand hygiene X 6. Environmental cleaning · Contact precautions: implemented to varying 7. Communicate CRE status to transferring and receiving facilities degrees X 8. Review infection prevention policies and procedures Lack of inter-facility notification X 9. Antimicrobial stewardship Outdated policies CRE alert New onset ESBL and CRE cases among local IMP outbreak case definition hospital ED visits and admissions 1 14 First Positives by Monthly Classification (N=129) Confirmed: CRE infection or colonization in a resident of North Carolina with laboratory confirmation of imipenemase metallo-β-12 lactamase (IMP) production by a CDC-recognized test. 10 · Probable: A resident of North Carolina with CRE infection or colonization with a positive phenotypic test for carbapenemase f Cases production (e.g, metallo-β-lactamase test, modified Hodge test, Carba NP, Carbapenem Inactivation Method (CIM), or modified CIM Number (mCIM)). South of the state New onset ESBL and CRE cases among local hospital ED New onset ESBL and CRE cases among local visits and admissions October 22, 2016-November 30, 2017 hospital ED visits and admissions (n=83*) 1 14 First Positives by Monthly Classification (N=129) 1 14 First Positives by Monthly Classification (N=129) 12 12







Candida auris: A drug-resistant germ that spreads in healthcare facilities

Candida auris (also called *C. auris*) is a fungus that causes serious infections. Patients with *C. auris* infection, their family members and other close contacts, public health officials, laboratory staff, and healthcare workers can all help stop it from spreading.



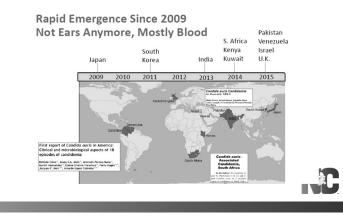
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- Difficult to identify
- Global health threat
- Invasive infections
- ~ 60% mortality
- Environmental persistence
- · Easily transmissible in the healthcare setting

NE





Candida auris

Countries from which *Candida auris* cases have been reported, as of February 15, 2021

This map is no longer being updated given how widespread *C. auris* has become.



North Carolina



5 clinical cases of *C. auris* **to date:** -2 linked to LTCF outbreaks in other states -3 linked to international hospitalizations

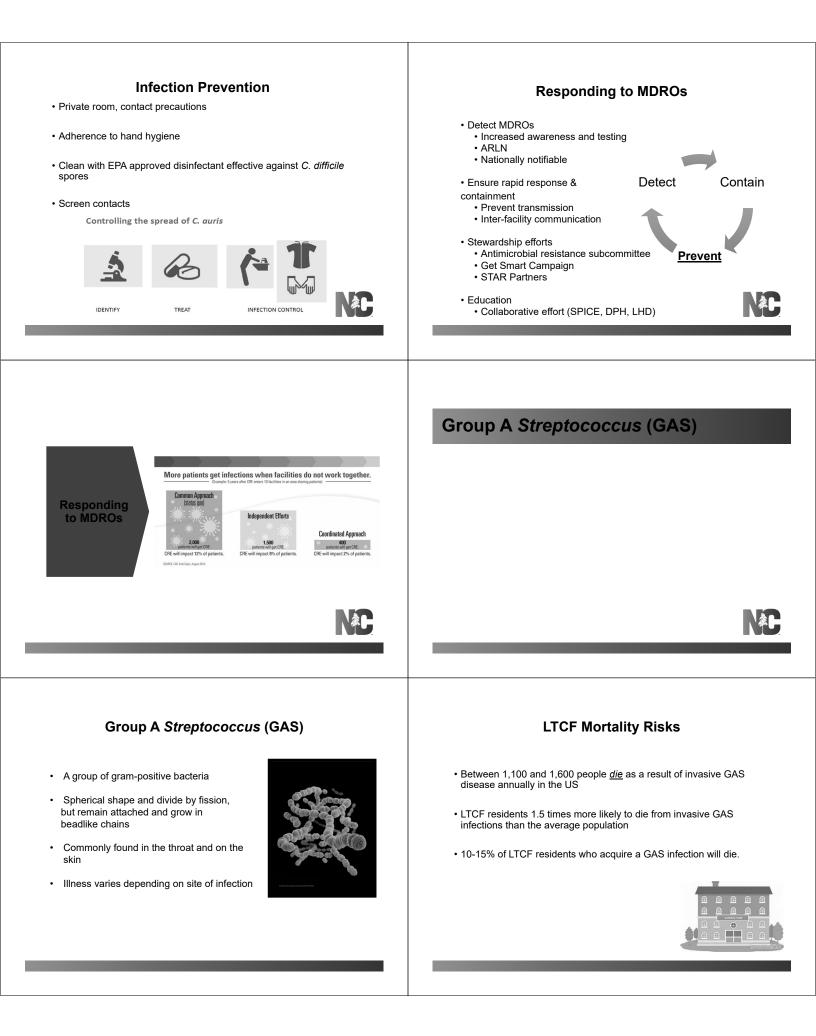


Added to NC Reportable Conditions list – October 1, 2018

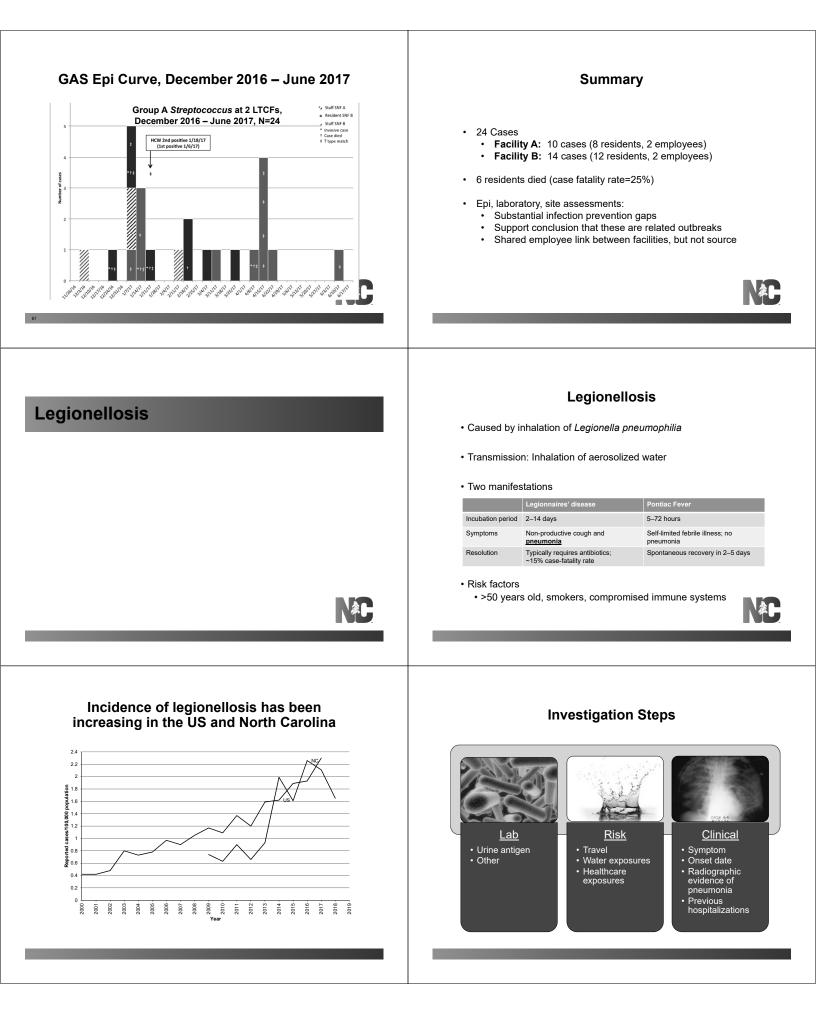
United States

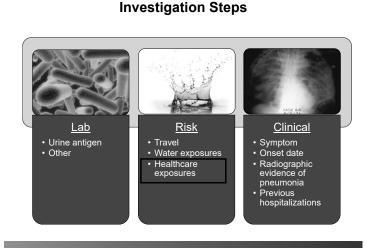
Reported clinical cases of Candida auris, July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021





GAS Outbreak, 2017 GAS Outbreak, 2017 Case definition: January 2017 • 2 Facilities in County X, North Carolina • 'Sister' facilities, owned by the same company New GAS infection or colonization identified by culture in a resident or symptomatic staff member of facility A or facility B with a specimen collection date on or after December 1, 2016 Site Visit Findings: Infection Risk Factors **Public Health Response** Retrospective chart review Increased staff contact linked to illness ٠ Significant nursing needs Survey healthcare workers for GAS symptoms • Non-intact skin/wound care · Immobility/bed baths Culture close contacts Link to inadequate infection control 4 months active surveillance Poor hand hygiene · Staff working while sick Site visit to assess infection control Whole Genome Sequencing, GAS Whole Genome Sequencing, GAS Tree scale: 0.1 Submitted isolates from 15 (14 residents & 1 employee) of 24 cases to CDC to determine strain relatedness · Serologic and molecular typing, whole genome sequencing 0410-17 0416-17 0408-17 0406-17 0409-17 0411-17 0414-17 0415-17 14/15 isolates (13 residents, 1 employee): • T type 3/13/B3264 or 13/B3264 • All emm type 89 WGS: closely related, maximum difference of 3 single nucleotide polymorphisms between sequences





The most important question...

Was the patient in the healthcare facility during the 14 days before symptom onset?

Create a timeline:

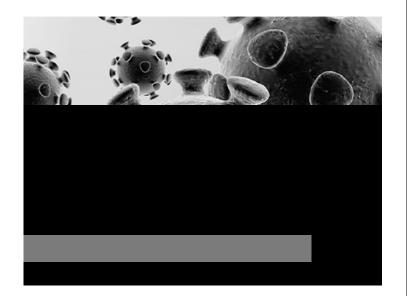
- · When was the patient admitted to the facility?
- · When did symptoms start?
- · Where did the patient go during the 14 days before symptom onset?



Healthcare-associated legionellosis

Definite healthcare-associated case

- Confirmed case of legionellosis in a person who has spent ≥10 days continuously in a healthcare facility during the 14 days before illness onset
- · Possible healthcare-associated case
 - · Confirmed case of legionellosis in a person who has spent part but not all of the 14 days before illness onset in a healthcare facility



NC Public Health Actions

Q Contact tracing

B

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Develop, disseminate guidance



Rule change to require reporting

Develop and implement control measures

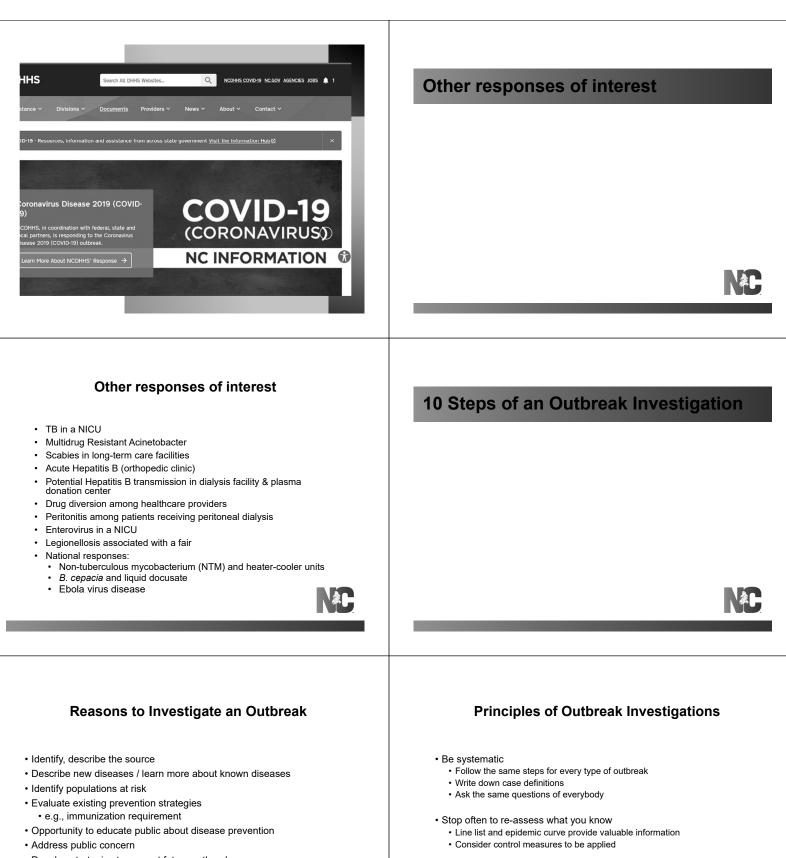
Develop laboratory testing capacity

Vaccine planning, distribution



Partnerships

HOSPITALS Adv Academia Laboratorie Laboratories aboratories Associations itals Hospitals Long to the bases of SPICE SPICE



- Develop strategies to prevent future outbreaks
- · Fulfill legal obligation and duty to care for the public
- · End the outbreak!



· Coordinate with partners



Steps of an Outbreak Investigation

These steps may occur simultaneously - or be repeated as new information is received

What is an Outbreak?

- · Anything above what is normally seen for any given time period
- If you aren't sure, call us!
- In a facility setting, an outbreak is generally defined as two or more individuals with the same illness
- Two or more 'epi-linked' cases
 - Caveat to this rule:
 - One case of certain diseases = Outbreak
 - Disease not normally seen (Avian Flu, SARS, Ebola)



Verify the Diagnosis

- · Review medical records, laboratory reports
- · Talk with patients
- · Request additional testing if needed
- Consult with local health department, communicable disease branch, state public health lab

NC

Case Definition

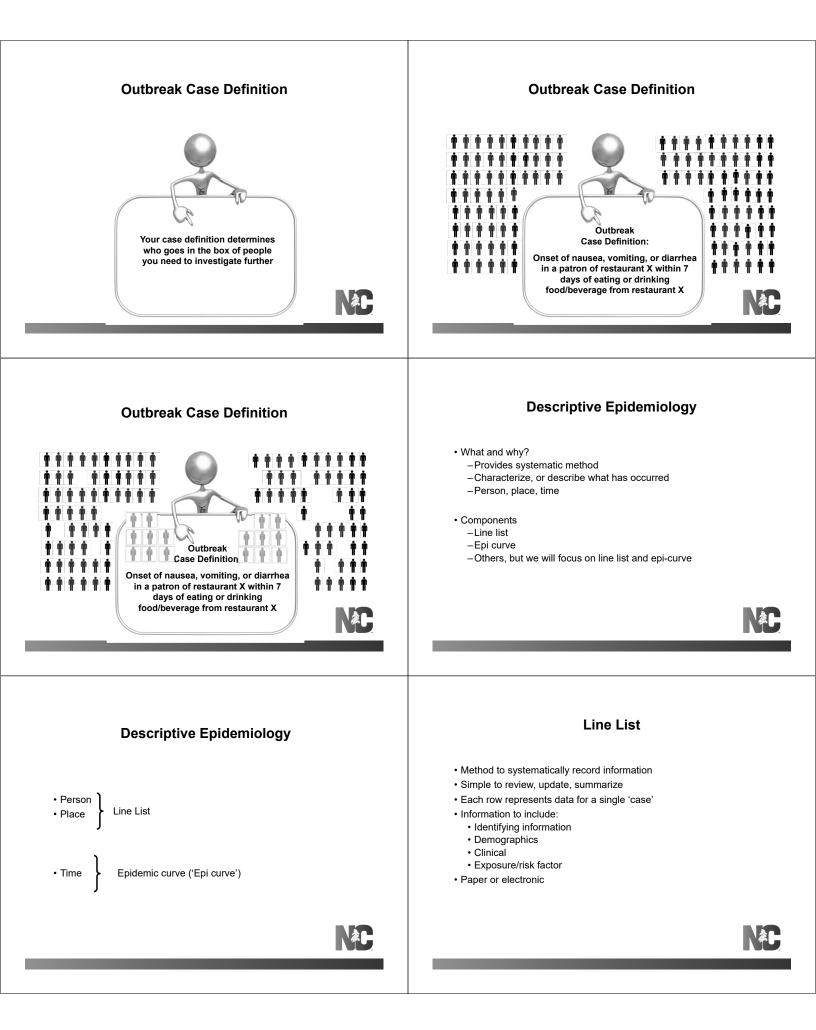
· 3 components:

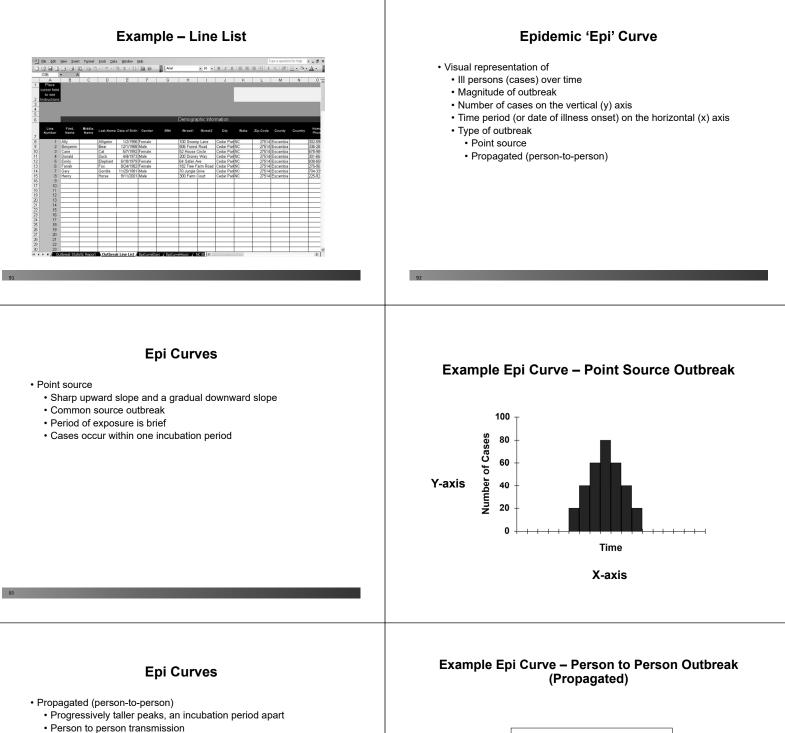
- Person..... Type of illness, characteristics (e.g., "a person with...")
- Place...... Location of suspected exposure
- Time...... When exposure or illness occurred

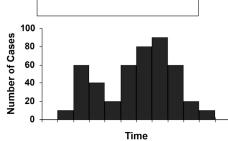
- What is a Case Definition?
- · Allows a simple, uniform way to identify cases
- "Standardizes" the investigation
- · Is specific to the outbreak











- May last a long time
- · May have multiple waves

What are Hypotheses?

- Statements which help us describe why and how the outbreak occurred (i.e., educated guess)
- · How do you generate hypotheses?
 - Review the existing body of knowledge
 - Examine line list, epi-curve

•

Conduct open-ended interviews with few case-patients

Evaluating the Hypotheses

- Two methods:
 - · Compare hypothesis with established facts
 - · Perform additional studies (e.g., analytic)
 - Cohort or case-control
 - · Assess exposures equally among ill and non-ill persons



Control Measures

- When should control measures be implemented immediately?
 - Source is known
 - Continued risk of either exposing others or being exposed (e.g., HCW diverting injectable drugs)
- · Control measures:
 - Are applied as soon as possible
 - May change during investigation



- Oral
 - Internally with team
 - Externally to public, media, health care providers
- Written
 - Daily updates (e.g., Situation Reports)
 - Final outbreak report



Conclusions

- Epidemiologic investigations essential component of public health, present opportunities to:
 - Characterize diseases
 - Identify populations at risk
 - Evaluate programs, policies, or existing prevention strategies
 - Train public health staff
 - Educate the public
 - Fulfill legal obligations and duty of care for the public
- 10 steps provide systematic framework necessary to investigate any outbreak

• Evaluate / document effectiveness of control measures

- To ensure outbreak is over
- To ensure secondary outbreak is not occurring
- Maintain surveillance for 2 average incubation periods following the last date of illness onset

Maintain Surveillance

