

National Center for Public Health Informatics (NCPHI)

CDC's National Center for Public Health Informatics (NCPHI), located within the Coordinating Center for Health Information and Service (CCHIS), provides leadership in the application of information and computer science and technology to public health practice, research, and learning.

Public Health Informatics (PHI):

- ▶ Applies information and computer science and technology to public health practice, research, and learning.
- ▶ Leads to new tools and methodologies.
- ▶ Facilitates the goal of achieving a nation-wide, integrated healthcare system.

As an example, through the application of informatics, emerging public health threat events (e.g., bioterrorism) may be detected earlier and more efficiently, leading to improved interventions or prevention measures.

Mission. The mission of NCPHI is to protect and improve the public's health through PHI discovery, innovation, and service.

NCPHI Organization. NCPHI is comprised of an Office of the Director and five Divisions with numerous programmatic areas of emphasis. The five divisions are as follows:

- ▶ **The Division of Alliance Management and Consultation.** Establishes and maintains relationships across CDC, with partners, and with other healthcare entities to enhance their understanding, capacity, and application of public health informatics.
- ▶ **The Division of Emergency Preparedness and Response.** Identifies and assesses public health informatics solutions for emergency preparedness and response to facilitate activities such as outbreak investigation, event detection and monitoring, and response.
- ▶ **The Division of Informatics Shared Services.** Identifies the needs and opportunities for components that can be utilized across multiple informatics solutions, both within CDC and the public health community at large, to ensure interoperability, integration, and consistency.
- ▶ **The Division of Integrated Surveillance Systems and Services.** Identifies and assesses informatics solutions for integrated surveillance, both nationally and internationally, and pursues appropriate directions for those solutions. Develops, manages, and supports integrated health surveillance, information, and operational solutions and tools to facilitate activities such as surveillance, laboratory reporting, analysis and tracking, visualization, reporting, and inventory management.
- ▶ **The Division of Knowledge Management.** Enables an environment that encourages the creation, management, sharing, and effective application of knowledge to improve public health, and health more generally.

Activities. NCPHI works toward achieving its mission through the following activities:

PHI Centers of Excellence. The Centers of Excellence in Public Health Informatics include two Centers funded in fiscal year (FY) 2005 at Harvard Medical School (including the Children's Hospital of Boston) and the University of Washington (see press release, September 30, 2005, and three Centers funded in FY06 at the University of Utah, Johns Hopkins University, and the New York City Health Department (see press release, January 8, 2007).

The goal of the Centers of Excellence in Public Health Informatics is to develop interdisciplinary approaches to:

- ▶ Electronic health record support of public health functions.
- ▶ Use of healthcare, population, and other public health data in supporting public health systems and analyses.
- ▶ Basic capabilities that support public health practice such as statistical and health surveillance.
- ▶ Public Health decision support.

BioSense. BioSense is a national program intended to improve the nation's capabilities for conducting real-time biosurveillance, and enabling health situational awareness through access to existing data from healthcare organizations across the country.

Public Health Information Network (PHIN). The CDC Public Health Information Network (PHIN) is a national initiative to improve the capacity of public health to use and exchange information electronically by promoting the use of standards and defining functional and technical requirements. PHIN strives to improve public health by enhancing research and practice through best practices related to efficient, effective, and interoperable public health information systems.