The Minnesota Model (MN Model)

Food Illness Surveillance and Response Cutting Across Traditional Boundaries

Description

The Minnesota Model (MN Model) for foodborne illness and disease surveillance evolved from a system in which Departments of Public Health and Agriculture were housed in separate locations with no centralized food illness reporting system. Now, the departments are connected in a joint facility that includes a diagnostic laboratory and a centralized reporting system that feeds into a cross-agency team. The surveillance system includes mandated isolate submission, centralized disease reporting, trained and experienced leadership, case interview capacity, a complaint hotline, and FoodNet/PulseNet resources. When an outbreak occurs, the MN Model includes immediate interviewing of cases during evenings and weekends, detailed questionnaires, dynamic cluster investigations, ingredient specific analysis, and supply chain traceback. A collaborative program between the Minnesota Department of Health and the University of Minnesota provides graduate student paraprofessionals to perform evening and weekend case interviews.

Purpose

The MN Model cuts across disciplines, agencies, and traditional government-university boundaries to prevent and respond more efficiently to outbreaks of foodborne illness.

Scope

Local - State of Minnesota, USA, although the MN Model often collaborates to solve regional and nation-wide outbreaks.

Primary Funders

Annual state funding and federal funding through the FoodNet program.

Participants & Key Collaborators

Minnesota Department of Public Health, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Governor's Office, University of Minnesota.

Definition of One Health

None. Key founders of the MN Model recognized that to be more effective in combating foodborne disease, multiple government agencies and outside collaborators would need to work together.

Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy

The system for foodborne illness surveillance has achieved a major transformation from earlier systems. Because much of this change was designed to address practical business needs, it has largely been institutionalized. No formal system is in place to address the continuing process of development for the MN Model, but the success of the current system is monitored in terms of successful disease detection and response.

Sources of Information

Interviews with:

- -Gene Hugoson, Former commissioner of Agriculture
- -Craig Hedberg, Professor of Environmental Health, University of Minnesota
- -Michael Osterholm, Director of Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy

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