

Policy Memo Regarding Implementation of the 2018 National Biodefense Strategy by HHS

To: Secretary of Health and Human Services

Executive Summary: Implementation of the National Biodefense Strategy of 2018 allows for the coordination of intergovernmental and agency orchestration of events to protect the American population. Priority should be given to goals 1-3 with goals 4 & 5 being addressed by amending legislation and updating goals of organizations focused on this endeavor previously. While following NBDS and NSPM-14 for coordination, ultimately a separate committee within PHEMCE should be created for NBDS with allocation of funding coming from separate appropriations specifically for this endeavor.

Background: The 2018 National Biodefense Strategy (NBDS) aims to coordinate the entire range of action taken by the United States Government to safeguard the American population against biological threats (BT) into a **single entity composed of a multi-level, interagency network**. The goal of the NBDS is to 1) assess, 2) prevent, 3) protect against, 4) respond to, and 5) recover from BT in an efficient and coordinated manner. Implementation of interagency coordination has been outlined in the NBDS and in NSPM-14 with the Secretary of HHS as the head of the Biodefense steering committee.

Considerations:

- Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) has been in law since 2006 and currently in the process of being updated
- National Health Security Strategy (NHSS) started in 2014 and is updated every 4 years
- Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasures Enterprise (PHEMCE) is a sub-department within HHS with a committee on National Biodefense Science Board (NBSD)
- Funding has not been directed and remains an open question

Policy Options/Alternatives: As HHS acts towards implementing the NBDS, goals 1-3 should be prioritized, with goals 4 & 5 being addressed through amendment of legislation and updating goals of current organizations and committees focused on this endeavor.

- Prioritizing goals 1-3 lays the groundwork to better understanding and prevention of BT.
- Prior legislation (PAHPA), committees (Homeland and National Security under OSTP, NBSB), and organizations (BARDA, DOD), addresses goals 4 & 5, updating these areas to encompass new objectives will speed up the implementation of NBDS.

While the implementation strategy outlined in the NBDS and NSMP-14 should be utilized it should ultimately be coordinated and fall under PHEMCE as a separate committee with members from the DOD, DOS, NIAID, FDA, USDA, and DHS. Funding should supplement current systems in place by creating appropriations specifically for NBDS.

Recommendation: My recommendation for implementation is to create a new committee for NBDS under PHEMCE while prioritizing assessing, preventing, and protecting the American population against biological threats (Goals 1-3). Additionally, I recommend amending previous legislation (PAHPA, NHS) and updating committee/organization goals (PHEMCE, NBSD) in order to comply with goals 4 & 5.