



National Association of County & City Health Officials

*The National Connection for Local Public Health*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NACCHO Announces the 2019 National Health Security Award Winners**

*Local Health Departments in Nevada, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington Honored*

**Washington, DC, July 25, 2019** – The [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO) and the [Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response](#) (ASPR) are pleased to announce the winners of the fourth annual National Health Security Awards. This award recognizes local health departments that have demonstrated significant accomplishments in implementing health security-related initiatives within their jurisdictions. The winners received a travel scholarship and were recognized at the [2019 NACCHO Annual Conference](#) in Orlando. They are:

- Skagit County Public Health, Mount Vernon, Washington
- Washoe County Health District, Reno, Nevada
- Philadelphia Health Department, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Bell County Public Health District, Temple, Texas

Local health departments' day-to-day operations have an impact on national health security across the country on a regular basis.

“Every time a staff member runs a vaccination clinic or spearheads a disease-prevention campaign, these efforts also improve health security,” said NACCHO Chief Executive Officer Lori Tremmel Freeman. “Every time a local health department helps to track a disease outbreak or connect people with personal health services, like preventive or health promotion services, the agency gives health security a direct boost. Advancing our

national health security is a vital component for all of the nation's local health departments."

"Our nation faces very real, very serious, health security threats, whether from nature or man-made, and they continue to evolve," said Edward Gabriel, deputy assistant secretary for preparedness and response at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which co-sponsors the annual awards program. "Local health departments have found innovative ways to move preparedness for those threats forward in their communities. Those efforts are essential in saving lives and protecting the American people, and that's what we are recognizing and honoring with these National Health Security Awards."

**CATEGORY: PROVIDING STRONG LEADERSHIP**

*Skagit County Public Health, Mount Vernon, Washington*

Skagit County developed a tool for small jurisdiction health departments to dispense medical countermeasures (MCM). The objectives of the tool are to shorten the surveillance time from situational awareness to activating the emergency response; efficiently distribute the post-exposure prophylaxis; and recover from the attack. Skagit County leveraged strong and unique partnerships across its community, including the Department of Emergency Management and the American Red Cross, to develop the toolkit.

**CATEGORY: BUILDING REGIONAL DISASTER HEALTH RESPONSE CAPABILITIES**

*Washoe County Health District, Reno, Nevada*

The Washoe County Health District (WCHD) has partnered with the local private ambulance company and two hospitals to create a committee to address emergency response planning from a medical perspective. Through this partnership, emergency planning for pre-hospital medical responses within Washoe County was developed, including a Multi-Casualty Incident Plan (MCIP). Over the partnership's 33 years, regional healthcare partners have become more defined, including the creation of a Mutual Aid Evacuation Annex.

**CATEGORY: SUPPORT THE SUSTAINMENT OF A ROBUST AND RELIABLE PUBLIC HEALTH SECURITY CAPACITY**

*Philadelphia Health Department, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) Culture of Preparedness project addresses various aspects of public health response capacity and community resilience through cross-cutting preparedness training programs for workforce development, as well as innovative communication and coordination strategies with partners. The components of the project include workforce development to prepare Health Department staff and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers for their roles during a public health emergency; use of innovative communication platforms to communicate with partners; and engagement of community partners to ensure timely information sharing during a public health emergency.

**CATEGORY: ADVANCE AN INNOVATIVE MEDICAL COUNTERMEASURES ENTERPRISE**

*Bell County Public Health District, Temple, Texas*

Across Texas, rural areas are built around farming and ranching, railroad stops, or small towns with few resources. The Mo-POD unit provides needed resources to multiple rural communities in an efficient and timely manner. The Mo-POD has the ability to go almost anywhere, and transports supplies, equipment, and technical staff needed to assist local communities in establishing medical countermeasure (MCM) operations for small-scale, short-duration POD operations.

For complex medical conditions, Mo-POD is also telemedicine-capable and connects clients directly to a physician who can discuss medical issues. The Mo-POD also has a small propane cooler useful when deploying vaccines in multi-dose vials or ready-to-use

dispense syringes. The trailer is equipped to establish drive thru or walk thru POD operations at more than one location simultaneously, eliminating the need to have pre-deployed POD kits at multiple locations, and reducing the opportunity for equipment loss.

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**About NACCHO**

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit [www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org).