



Ministry of Health

COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Training

Rapid Response Teams

Learning objectives

At the end of this session you should be able to:

- Explain what is a RRT, its role and characteristics
- Describe the composition of a RRT
- List the roles and responsibilities of the RRT members
- Understand the lists of critical contacts
- Constitute necessary equipment and items

What is a RRT

A Rapid Response Team is a multi-disciplinary team that works to ensure rapid, coordinated detection, investigation and response to outbreaks of diseases and events of public health concern

Why RRT?

- They are the first technical teams to timely respond to any public health events
- A fully operational RRT is critical to be able to act immediately (within 24 hrs) once a suspected case is reported
- The RRT will act as an initial stabilizing resource in the earliest phase of the outbreak

Composition of RRTs

National and County level

- Team leader - appointed by the organizations
- Surveillance officer / Epidemiologists
- Medical laboratory scientist
- Environmental health officer /Public health officer
- Clinician (Medical Officer, Clinical Officer, Nursing Officer)
- Health promotion officer
- Veterinarian in case of a zoonotic disease outbreak
- Logistician
- Others as needed

Team leader

- Organizes the RRT in planning for an investigation
- Defines to the RRT members the objectives of the investigation
- Assigns tasks to each member on the team
- Reports to relevant national authorities (eg EOC) and communicates to the relevant authorities as per existing channels
- Ensures a coordinated response among team members
- Collects information from all team members daily such as epidemiological data, response activities, challenges and recommendations
- Responsible for the welfare of the team

Epidemiologist/Surveillance Coordinator 1/2

- Responsible for surveillance and epidemiological investigation (analysis by person, place and time)
- Updates and shares surveillance data with the team and with coordination units at local, sub-national and national levels
- Actively seeks information on other cases and ensures contact monitoring
- Identifies potential modes of exposure to community transmission
- Develops strategies to determine the etiology of the disease

Epidemiologist/Surveillance Coordinator 2/2

- Sets up mechanisms to stop the exposure depending on investigation results
- Provides case definitions and signals to health workers and the community
- Takes patient history in order to identify other cases
- Collects, analyses and interprets data
- Supervises data management
- Write reports and submits to the team leader

Clinician

- Provides direct support to case management in health care centers and in the community
- Provides advice and recommendations on clinical management
- Fills-in the investigation form with clinical signs of cases
- Supports the assessment of IPC in health care centers and puts in place IPC measures
- Collects information on patient history, treatment and follow-up to improve the clinical response
- Decides with Epidemiologist if case is suspected or probable, based on case definitions
- Informs the patient/family/caregivers of laboratory findings and their interpretation, and about the next steps
- Reports findings to the team and team leader takes the next steps

Laboratory personnel

- Responsible for setting up an operational system to ensure the safe and appropriate collection, package and transportation of samples from affected areas to the designated laboratory and dissemination of result to the RRT
- Ensures that all laboratory equipment and supplies for specimen collection are available
- Ensures specimen referral system and procedures are in place and shared with health facilities, County and national level
- Sets-up systems to maintain an efficient collaboration between epidemiologists, health care centers and laboratories
- Responsible for laboratory protocols and Biosafety and IPC standards implementation and adherence, including quality control
- Ensures all laboratory personnel are trained on safe triple packaging, and IPC procedures in handling blood specimens

Health Promotion Officer

- Undertakes rapid assessments to understand the perceptions, knowledge, beliefs, practices in communities and at health care centers in affected areas
- Identify the socio-cultural and organizational factors that can affect/stimulate the adoption of control measures
- Supports media and public communication and engagement
- Ensures the availability of communication materials and tools;-identifies the appropriate language and format at all levels
- Makes recommendations to set-up an appropriate communication strategy
- Develops mobilization strategies that support the adoption of IPC measures
- Introduces the team and explains the objectives of the visit

Logistician

- Responsible for the transport of teams, materials and specimens
- Ensures the availability and maintenance of essential material, such as medicines, vaccines and Personal Protective Equipment to be used during the investigation or the response
- Maps out locations of equipment and supplies for the response with capacities for storage, warehousing including maintaining inventory
- Provides logistical support for transportation of samples to laboratories
- Sets-up communication equipment
- Coordinates the security of the team
- Ensures that administrative processes are respected during field operations and ensures financial management

Infection Prevention and Control Expert

- Responsible for IPC protocols (SOP, guidelines) implementation and adherence, including quality control during all RRT activities
- Ensures IPC personnel are equipped and trained on safety, and IPC procedures and protocols
- Ensures IPC equipment, materials, and supplies are available and on location as required
- Support IPC activities for laboratory

Others

- Environmental health Officer /WASH Officer
- Animal health officers

Key RRT contact list

- Hot line to Call Centre/EOC
- Medical Officer at Call Centre
- County Director of Health/SCMOH
- Incident Manager
- Investigation/Rapid Response Team
- Ambulance (Transfer) Team
- Designated isolation unit
- Designated Laboratory
- Disinfection team
- National MOH / PHEOC
- Relevant partners and stakeholders
- Others

Equipment/Material Requirements -1

- ❖ Depend on the particular event
- ❖ May include
 - ❖ Case definitions, contacts tracing tools
 - ❖ Field investigation guidelines and forms
 - ❖ Alcohol-based disinfectant
 - ❖ Personal Protection Equipment (PPEs)
 - ❖ Infection prevention and control (IPC) materials and supplies
 - ❖ Cell Phones or other reliable communication equipment

Equipment/Material Requirements -2

- Information Education and Communication materials (in appropriate language)
- Laboratory materials (sample collection, packaging and transport materials)
- Dedicated vehicles (land, air or sea as needed) including access to ambulances
- Thermo-flash no-contact infrared thermometers
- GPS

Effective Coordination

1. National/County/sub-county departments, etc.
2. Other non-governmental health stakeholders
3. With local authorities
4. With team members
 - Communicate
 - Delegate
 - Establish clear lines of responsibilities
 - Stress management strategies

Field deployment – to succeed:

- Team formation – guided by plan of response
- Team safety first – first aid, vaccination, mosquito nets, repellent, food, water, fuel, PPE, etc
- Excellent logistics support - supplies, equipment, appropriate vehicles, accommodation
- Good rapport with
 - local authority and community leadership
 - Local human health providers, animal health providers
 - Other local stakeholders
- Learn about local environment – local knowledge, maps
- Sharing information at all level and provide feedback
- Guidelines, SOPs, information and communication tools

Thank you