



# Operation Allies Welcome

E. Katrina Saphrey, MPH

Epidemiologist Senior

Crater Health District Health Departments

# Background

August 29, 2021: President Biden directed the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to lead and coordinate ongoing efforts across the federal government to support vulnerable Afghans, including those who worked alongside us in Afghanistan for the past two decades, as they safely resettle in the United States.

# Initial Processing

- COVID-19 testing
- Isolation of COVID-19 positive individuals
- Vaccinations\*- MMR, varicella, polio, COVID-19, and other age-appropriate vaccinations
- Additional medical services
- Screening and support for individual who are neither US citizens nor lawful permanent residents

# Processing at U.S Military Facilities

- Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia
- Fort Pickett, Virginia
- Fort Lee, Virginia\*
- Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico
- Fort McCoy, Wisconsin
- Fort Bliss, Texas
- Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey
- Camp Atterbury, Indiana

# 2021 Measles Outbreak

In 2021, a measles outbreak occurred in Virginia that affected the Central and Northern Health Regions of Virginia. As of November 8, 2021, 22 cases among people who had recently traveled from Afghanistan as part of the United States government's emergency evacuation efforts (Operation Allies Welcome) were confirmed in Virginia between September 7 and October 15, 2021. The outbreak was declared over on November 8, 2021.

## Confirmed Measles Cases by Region and Health District\*\*

Region and Health District	Total
Central Region Total	1
Piedmont	1
Northern Region Total	21
Fairfax	12
Prince William	9
Virginia Total	22

\*\*The region (or health district) is assigned based on the location at the time of diagnosis and does not imply permanent residency in Virginia.

Crater investigated 2 cases of measles that were determined to be vaccine strain, therefore were not counted as confirmed cases.

# Public Health Concern

- Large uncontrollable outbreak
- Spread around the US
- Spill over into the community/organizations volunteering to help the repatriates

# Treating All Afghan Repatriates as Exposed

- Multiple potential areas of exposure
  - Lilypads
  - Airport (pre-arrival to US)
  - Testing area at Dulles pre arrival to Ft. Lee
  - Transportation to Ft. Lee

# Public Health Action

- Communication to hospitals and healthcare facilities
- Communication with correctional facilities and law enforcement agencies
- Better communication between local, state and federal partners
  - Collaboration with CDC
- Provide prophylaxis to everyone potentially exposed
  - Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine for everyone eligible
  - Immune Globulin (IG)
    - Intramuscular (IGIM) for <12 months
    - Intravenous (IGIV) for pregnant individuals without proof of immunity (IgG positive or 2 MMR vaccine doses)
      - Drew titers on as many pregnant women as the bases could find
- 21 day quarantine of Afghan Repatriates at the military base/lillypad
- Site visit at Ft. Lee
  - Angela Myrick-West- Central Region Epidemiologist
  - Courtney Ayers- Crater Deputy Epidemiologist
  - Nakia Clemmons- CDC

# IGIM Clinic- Friday, September 17, 2021

- 37 kids received the immune globulin
- Rich/Henrico nurse trained on the administration of the IMIG came to the clinic and trained Crater nurses as well as other military contract staff to administer the IGIM
- Crater nurses administered as well as the federal contractor, Epi was onsite for administrative duties such as filling out paperwork and was asked to hold the babies especially when moms had multiple children
- Additional babies were found
  - 8 additional babies received the immune globulin on September 19, 2021
  - Angie Myrick-West, Central Region Epi received additional doses from Central Pharmacy, I picked them up from Angie in the vaccine cooler and drove them to the military personnel

# 9/13/21

- 1700 repatriates at Ft. Lee
- >80 pregnant women
  - 12 at the 34 week mark and 40 at the 7 month mark

# IGIV Coordination

- Ft. Lee- 63 pregnant women tested for measles IgG (9/17-9/29)
  - 8 in need of IGIV (all IgG-)
- Ft. Pickett- 135 pregnant women tested for measles IgG (9/12-10/4);
  - 13 individuals in need of IGIV (13 IgG- and 1 equivocal)
- Equivocals were also offered the IGIV
- Ft. Lee wrote all of the orders, coordinated transports and provided interpreters
- Ft. Pickett had trouble finding the individuals to transport to SRMC

# Lessons Learned- IGIM Clinic

- Being equipped with more interpreters (there was only one at the clinic)
- Once the ID is verified keep the medical documents with the patient's family to prevent the documents from ending up with the wrong patient
- Need an infant scale
- Ft. Lee needed better lists of everyone being housed on base

# Lessons Learned- IGIV Coordination

- Overall message- IGIV coordination was VERY difficult. At Fort Pickett many women missed their appointments because they could not find them to send them. In our area SRMC and then VCU gave all the IGIV.
  - No quarantine order so individuals were able leave the base freely
- Figure out who would be responsible to write the orders early on



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# Operation Allies Welcome Completes Vaccination Campaign for Measles and Varicella for Afghan Evacuees

**Release Date:** October 4, 2021

*OAW flights from abroad will resume this week*

# Reportable Disease Investigations (including cases that were ruled out)

- COVID-19
- Rubella
- Congenital Rubella Syndrome (CRS)
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Malaria
- Campylobacter
- Giardia
- Tuberculosis
- Syphilis
- Chlamydia

# Lessons Learned

- Federal contract agency needed to be more transparent on the services they were able to provide
- Earlier consultation with local and state department of healths and surrounding hospitals
- Better tracking of how many repatriates were on each base
- Reporting all reportable diseases including suspect cases
- Starting pertinent vaccination series before entry into US/verify immunity
- Assess funding for testing/utilizing local hospitals
- Earlier communication with hospitals when repatriates were en route to the ED or other clinics with information on which base they were coming from
- Placing limits on the number of people who accompany the ill person to their visit

# Q&A