



2026 Public Health Preparedness Summit

March 24-26 | Richmond, VA

Central Region Epi Strike Team

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Speakers



Angela Myrick-West, MPH
Central Region Epidemiologist
Division of Surveillance and Investigation
Office of Epidemiology



Sarah Gagnon, MBA
Medical Reserve Coordinator
Chesterfield Health District



Stephanie Duong, MPH
Senior Epidemiologist
Chesterfield Health District



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Agenda

- Houston- we might have a problem!
- What are possible solutions? Who can help us?
- Overcoming barriers/resistance

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Listening to volunteers

- Want safety measures
- Outdated and confusing training
- Need for hands on training
- What's with the secretive alerts?
- What do field epidemiologists do?

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Overcoming staff resistance

- No time to train volunteers
- Staff shortages
- Already too much on my plate
- Are the volunteers qualified?
- Will I have to train them?
- What if's

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Identifying staff skill sets

How to use volunteers to fill gaps

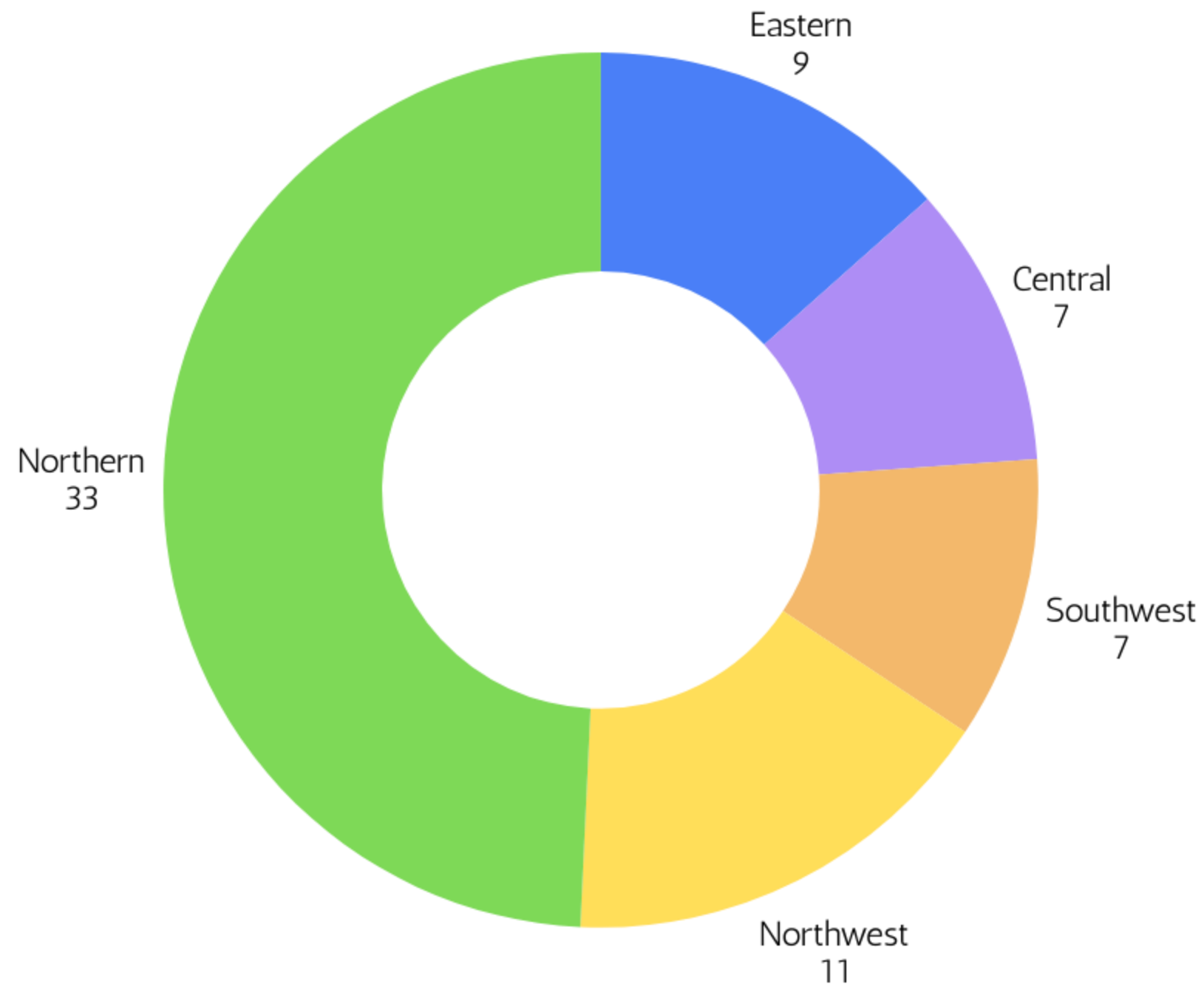


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Statewide Overview for MRC Volunteers



33 MRC Volunteers joined a live statewide overview training from Fall 2025.

What does this tell us?

- There is interest in Epi work from our MRC volunteers across the state!!
- Have open conversations of knowing WHO makes up your pool of volunteers and how to best utilize their skillsets.
- Interdepartmental collaboration is needed to make this work!

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Members of the Central Region Epi Strike Team

Type of Volunteer	Number of Volunteers
Medical	19
Non-medical	18
Total	37

Medical Personnel includes:

- 8 registered nurses
- 4 advanced practice registered nurses
- 1 pharmacist
- 1 respiratory therapist
- 2 physicians
- 3 veterinarians

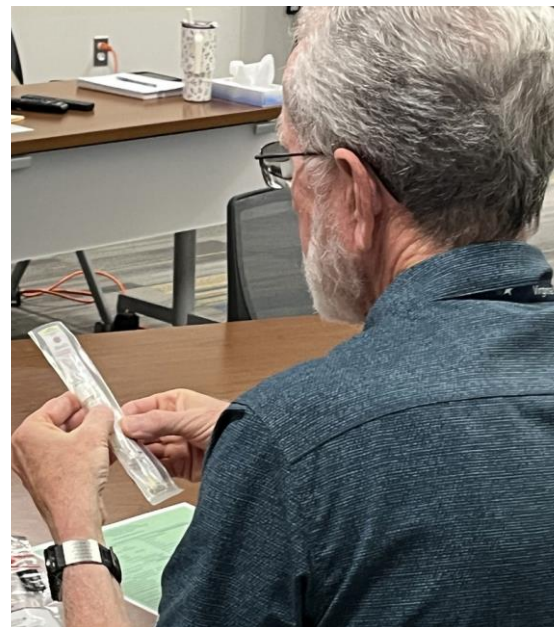
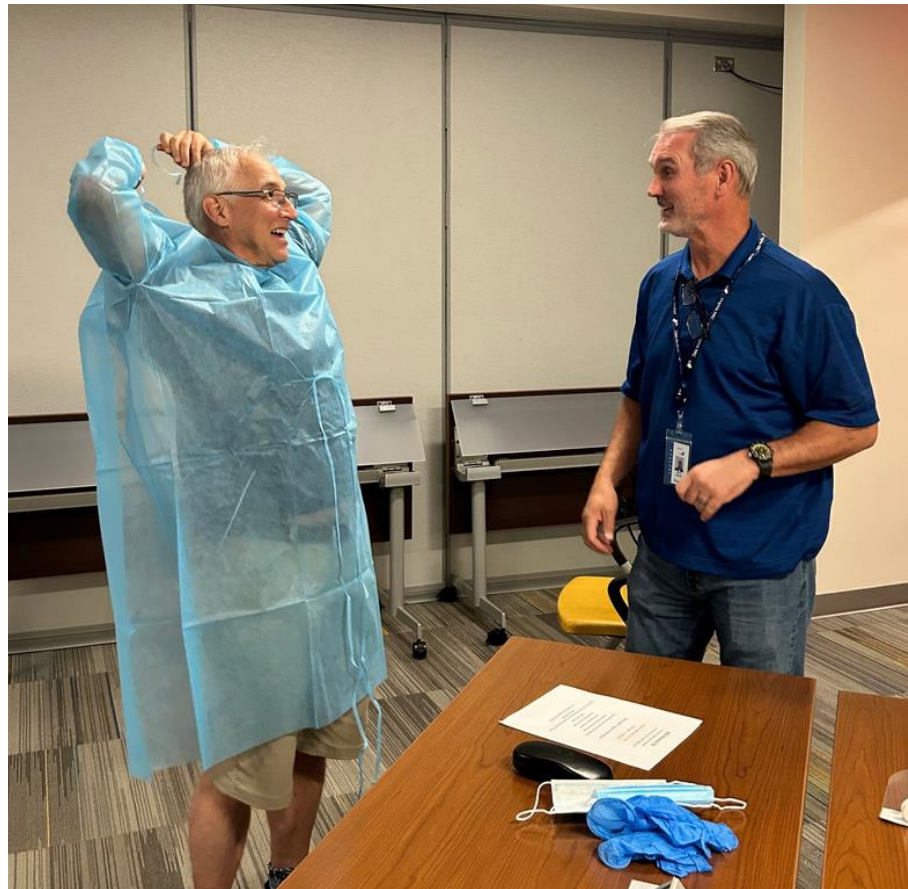
Medical personnel can vaccinate and perform testing!

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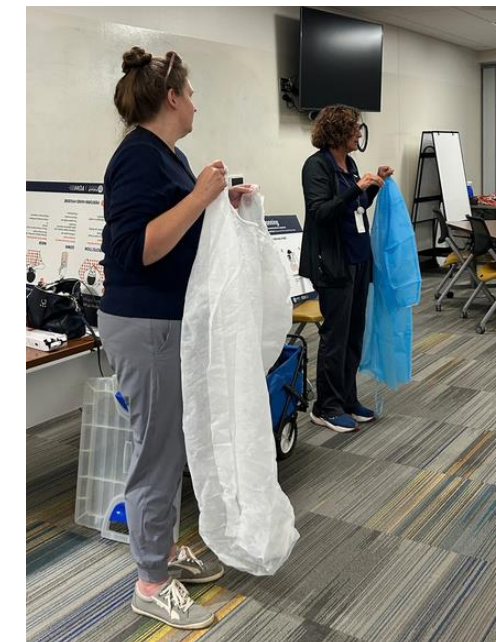
Orientation to see who is out there..

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Donning and Doffing Training

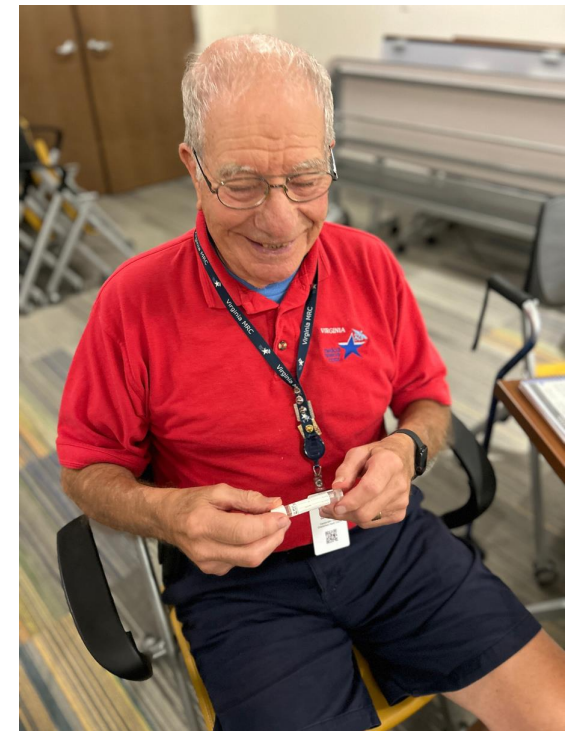


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Specimen Collection and Paperwork

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Role of VDH in measles case response

- ▶ Coordinate with DCLS for appropriate testing
- ▶ Specimen Collection
- ▶ Facility and contact risk assessments and recommendations
 - ▶ Monitoring, Quarantine, or Isolation
- ▶ Providing post exposure prophylaxis: MMR and IG
 - ▶ Individuals/small groups
 - ▶ Community clinics
 - ▶ Furlough
- ▶ Coordinating IVIG
- ▶ Coordinating medical care with focus on IPC
- ▶ Subject matter experts and real-world experience for guidance



Measles Refresher

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Additional Trainings completed by the Epi strike team

- 5 members completed the TEEX 2-day POD, Planning and Response training
- CDC TEST POD playthrough
- Rabies Educator Certificate
- Rabies Healthcare Certificate



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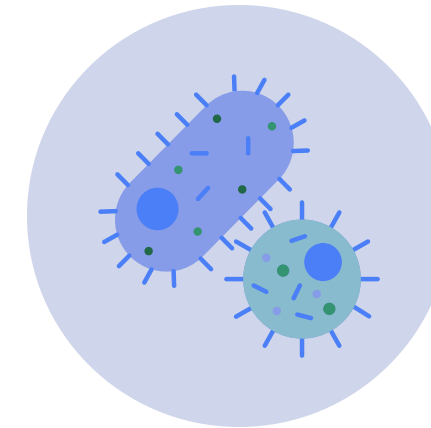
How have we utilized our MRC volunteers?



3-day turnaround time from notification of a Hep A case to PEP clinic at the local LTCF. A medical MRC volunteer was used to help provide vaccine to exposed residents and staff.



Assisted with conducting research on Measles alternative therapies as we continue to see increases of Measles cases in Virginia.



Recruited former COVID-19 staff to MRC to assist with communicable disease investigations when EPI team was down 2 team members.



A MRC medical volunteer conducted 70+ rabies follow up phone calls to assess victims and provide guidance in receiving rabies post exposure prophylaxis.



A MRC volunteer who is a veterinarian, assisted with assessing a dog who had exposure to Mpox.



Non-medical volunteer assisting with organizing 2 years of EPI files including case report forms and lab reports.

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Current MRC Training

MRC website <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/mrc/training/>

Current MRC Epidemiology training includes:

- VDH: “Behind the Scenes of an Epi Outbreak: Ebola” (Archived)
- VDH: An Introduction to Isolation and Quarantine
- [VDH: Behind the Scenes of an Epi Outbreak: Hepatitis A \(OnDemand\)](#)
- VDH: Contact Tracer Training Plan
 - COVID-19 specific

EPIDEMIOLOGY

VDH: “Behind the Scenes of an Epi Outbreak: Ebola” (Archived)

TRAIN Course ID: 1062714

Course Description: “Behind the Scenes of an Epi Outbreak: Ebola” is an on-demand videoconference that explains how Virginia responded to the Ebola outbreak. This informative session is great for volunteers who may work in shelters, Point-of-Dispensing (POD) or anyone who just wants to know how Virginia responds to an Epi outbreak.

Time: 2hrs

CEU/CME: None

VDH: An Introduction to Isolation and Quarantine

TRAIN Course ID: 1021694

Course Description: It is important for health department employees to understand how isolation and quarantine could be used to protect the public from the spread of dangerous contagious diseases. This presentation provides a brief overview of isolation and quarantine and outlines the Virginia Department of Health’s strategy for invoking and enforcing Virginia’s isolation and quarantine laws.

Time: 14 minutes

CEU/CME: None

Required: Epi Response Team Members

VDH: Behind the Scenes of an Epi Outbreak: Hepatitis A (OnDemand)

TRAIN Course ID: 1089068

Course Description: An informative webinar that provides a basic overview of the Hepatitis A virus, the vaccination and how to respond to an outbreak.

Time: 2hrs

CEU/CME: None

VDH: Contact Tracer Training Plan TRAIN# 5806

Course Description: The Contact Tracer will identify and contact persons suspected or confirmed as having COVID-19 in order to gather information necessary for public health case investigation and contact tracing

Time: Varies

CEU/CME: None

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Improving Statewide Training

RECORDED Office of Epidemiology Overview for MRC Volunteers

Are you ever curious about the world of epidemiology? Do you wonder what an Epidemiologist does? Then this one-hour training is for you! Epidemiology teams monitor the occurrence of over 50 communicable diseases here in the state of Virginia. When there is a surge in reporting, the timing of investigations and specimen collection is very important. MRC Volunteers can play a vital role in helping to gather information during investigations and surges. MRC can also help administer prophylaxis to help us protect our community! You do not have to have a medical background to help.

Start Training: TRAIN Course ID# [1132825](#)

Training Duration: 90 minutes

**Epi Overview
is available
to watch
TODAY**

More training to come..

- Interactive Epi Orientation: scheduled to be ready April
- Don and Doffing Training- JIT video training
- Specimen Collection
- Interviewing and Surveillance

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MRC Volunteer Perspective



Lee Ann Chambliss RN FNP BBA

Infection Control and Prevention

Johns Hopkins Hospital Children's Center:

- Chairperson for Pediatric Nursing Emergency Department Quality Improvement Committee (2008-2019), representing the Pediatric ED as a member of the Children's Center Infection Control Committee.
 - Projects included central line infection prevention, hand hygiene and audits, utilizing evidence-based practice to focus on patient safety and high-quality patient care.
- Nursing leader for CUSP (Comprehensive Unit-based Safety Program) Team in the Pediatric Emergency Department.
- CUSP training and interaction with the Armstrong Institute Patient Safety and Quality at Johns Hopkins Hospital.



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Questions?



Thank you!

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