



ESR Epidemiological Skills Development Programme

Module 1.3

Outbreak Investigations Refresher

Course Outline

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Overall Aims and Objectives and learning outcomes

Purpose of this course

To provide an introduction (or refresher) to outbreak investigation, through a facilitated table-top case study

Overall objectives

By the end of the course students will have been introduced to a realistic outbreak investigation and gained a greater awareness of the processes involved in the epidemiological investigation of a common source outbreak.

Competencies

The course will support competencies in the following areas

- Confirmation and assessment of outbreaks
- Outbreak Investigation skills (operational aspects)
- Epidemiological Analysis
- Control measures

Participants will have had the opportunity to **practice** using symptom information and incubation period to identifying possible infectious agents

Desired Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this course participants will **be aware of**

- The main steps in an outbreak questionnaire
- The steps involved in carrying out a retrospective cohort study
- Recommended control measures
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On successful completion of this course participants will **be able to**

- Assist with the development of an outbreak questionnaire based on a standard template
- Developing line listing
- Recognise an epidemic curve for a common event outbreak
- Assist in investigating and controlling a common event outbreak/outbreak requiring a retrospective cohort study

Content overview

Session 01: Confirmation and assessment

- Using symptom information and incubation period to identifying possible disease agents
- Verifying the diagnosis
- Getting information about people who are ill
- Case finding
- Other important first steps

Session 02: Field investigation operational aspects:

- Important Initial actions in the environmental investigation
- Line listings

Session 03: Epidemiological Investigations (analytical epidemiology)

- How knowing the bacteria can help you identify a meal
- How to identify food source (sampling plus potentially epidemiological study)
- Pluses and minuses of various ways of collecting study data
- Main types of information that should be collected
- Designing an email introduction and adapting a questionnaire
- Plotting and interpreting an epidemic curve

Session 04: Control and Response Measures

- What recommendations would you make to reduce the chance of another outbreak

Session 05: Review

- Extras – consider relevance, issues raised by this example etc

Case study

Overview

During the course, students should be organised into four groups of 4-6 to work through the study with the help of the facilitator.

Objectives of using case study format

- To give students the opportunity to apply theory to a realistic situation
- To develop experience in interactive group processes relevant to outbreak investigation

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment

There is not formal assessment for this course however all participants who attend the full course will receive a certificate of attendance.