

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Public Health Preparedness: Are We Ready for disaster?

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GEORGES C. BENJAMIN is the executive director of the American Public Health Association (APHA), the United States' oldest and largest organization of public health professionals. For the last 20 years he has been actively practicing public health at the local, national and international level. He is the publisher of the American Journal of Public Health, The Nation's Health Newspaper and the APHA's publication on infectious diseases, the Communicable Disease Manual (CCDM). Dr. Benjamin is a graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology and the University of Illinois, College of Medicine. He is board certified in internal medicine and a fellow of the American College of Physicians, a fellow emeritus of the American College of Emergency Physicians, an honorary fellow of the Royal Society of Public Health, a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, and a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies.

JACK HERRMANN is the senior advisor and chief of public health preparedness at the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). He is the organization's chief preparedness liaison to local, state and federal partner agencies and leads the organization's preparedness portfolio aimed at enhancing and strengthening the preparedness and response capabilities of local health departments. Mr. Herrmann is the organization's subject matter expert on mass fatalities planning, medical countermeasure distribution and dispensing, bioterrorism preparedness, and disaster mental health. Prior to arriving to NACCHO, Mr. Herrmann was assistant professor of psychiatry and director of the Program in Disaster Mental Health at the University of Rochester Medical Center, Department of Psychiatry. As the former director of Strong EAP, Mr. Herrmann specialized in developing critical response teams for local police, fire, and healthcare organizations. He has also developed disaster mental health training curricula for behavioral health and spiritual care response teams in communities across the United States. Mr. Herrmann earned a master's degree in education from the University of Rochester, is certified by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) and is a licensed mental health counselor in the State of New York.

ALI KHAN is the director of the Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response (OPHPR) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Dr. Khan, a retired U.S. Assistant Surgeon General, supports public health preparedness and response activities at CDC and state and local health departments. He served as a primary architect of CDC's bioterrorism preparedness program, directed its operational response to the 2001 anthrax attacks in Washington, DC, and published the first U.S. national public health preparedness strategic plan. His professional career has focused on emerging infectious diseases, bioterrorism, and global health security. Dr. Khan received his medical degree from Downstate Medical Center and

completed a joint residency in internal medicine and pediatrics at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He also holds a master of public health from Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health where he is an adjunct professor and directs the emerging infections course. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Physicians. He has over 150 peer-reviewed publications, textbook chapters and editorials, and has consulted extensively for countries and high profile organizations including NASA and the World Health Organization.

ROSANNE PRATS serves as the director of emergency preparedness for the Department of Health & Hospitals (DHH) in Louisiana. In this role, she coordinates activity between local, state and federal agencies. Dr. Prats worked several years for the federal government as an information technology program manager and computer specialist. While pursuing her master's in health administration degree at Tulane University, she held a residency position at the Department of Health & Hospitals' Office of Public Health (OPH). There she was a key player in developing the Louisiana Public Health Institute, a nonprofit entrepreneurial vehicle through which the promotion of public health activities could be furthered. Prior to working at the Department of Health and Hospitals, she assisted the State Health Officer in developing and implementing its Emergency Preparedness Disaster Plan. Before that, she worked for the largest private hospital system - Columbia/HCA. As one of four consultants, she developed, interpreted and evaluated market demographics and competitor analyses to determine strategic placement of clinics primarily in the Louisiana, Arkansas and Florida markets. Dr. Prats received her master of health administration and doctorate at Tulane University.