

Progress Toward Updating the NIOSH PPT Program Action Plan for Healthcare Worker Personal Protective Equipment

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Abstract

In 2006, NIOSH's Personal Protective Technology (PPT) program began an initiative to develop and execute a comprehensive research, intervention, certification, standards development, and information dissemination program to improve the efficacy and effectiveness of personal protective equipment (PPE) used by healthcare workers (HCW) during a pandemic. As part of that effort, the PPT program provided a near term and long term strategy through a draft action plan. Since the draft action plan was first published the report has been updated, most recently in 2010, to respond to emerging threats (e.g., 2009 H1N1 flu pandemic).

Controversies persist today on issues of PPE selection and use, while the latest research offers potential solutions and new concerns. For example, recent observational studies and surveys of HCW are consistent with published findings that indicate marginal compliance with proper PPE use practices and procedures. In response, the PPT program began updating its HCW PPT action plan. The framework for this revision is based on the 12 recommendations from a 2011 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report "Preventing Transmission of Pandemic Influenza and Other Viral Respiratory Diseases: PPE for Healthcare". These recommendations range from cross-cutting research on viral respiratory disease transmission to policy/regulatory research needs (e.g., new respirator/face mask standards and clarifying PPE guidelines for outbreaks). Compliance with proper PPE use practices and procedures has been identified as an overarching goal of the revised action plan. This presentation will provide an update on the revised action plan, including an overview of the current PPT program activities addressing the IOM recommendations, proposed priorities for 2013-2018, and plans for obtaining stakeholder feedback.