Calling All School Nurses

By Kelsey Gordon and Emily Nickel

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) Bureau of Community Health Systems hosts several preparedness IT systems, which can be utilized at state and local levels to assist and support preparedness efforts. Two of those systems are the Kansas Health Alert Network (KS-HAN) and the Kansas System for the Early Registration of Volunteers (K-SERV).

KS-HAN is a secure, web-based electronic communication system that enables local and state health and safety entities to share public and environmental health information rapidly. The system allows users to send, receive and discuss information of public and environmental health importance in a secure environment. It also allows for the rapid notification of any and all users in the event of an emergency, when the timely distribution of recommendations on investigation, prevention and treatment is critical.

KS-HAN contains over 3,000 participants from local health departments, hospitals, emergency medical services, animal health, clinics, state agencies, private and public health laboratories and other first responders across the state.

In order to expand audiences we are enrolling school nurses, LIKE YOU! During H1N1 the use of school nurses was vital in reporting influenza like symptoms and absences relating to H1N1. This was useful for gathering information on how communities were being affected and to see the migration of the illness across the state.

KS-HAN is an invitation-only system. An invitation code sent from KS-HAN administrator is required prior to registration. To be considered for participation, email your name, employers, employer phone number, job title or description to kshanadmin@kdheks.gov.

The Kansas System for the Early Registration of Volunteers, K-SERV, is a secure registration system and database for volunteers willing to respond to public health emergencies or other disasters in Kansas or other areas across the country. It can be utilized as a volunteer management system at the local and state levels.

During an event, a community may need to use K-SERV to get the assistance of volunteers to aid in response. K-SERV improves the efficiency of volunteer deployment and utilization by verifying in advance the credentials of volunteer healthcare professionals. This pre-registration and pre-verification of potential volunteers enhances the state's ability to quickly and efficiently send and receive appropriate health professionals as needed to assist with an emergency response.
If you are interested in volunteering to help Kansans, register today at
https://kshealth.kdhe.state.ks.us/VolunteerRegistry. For more information, email
kservadmin@kdheks.gov.