

FY SEPT 30, 2024 - SEPT 29, 2025

Annual Summary

Serious Communicable Diseases Program

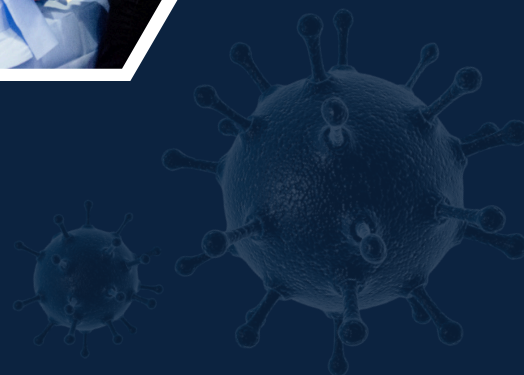
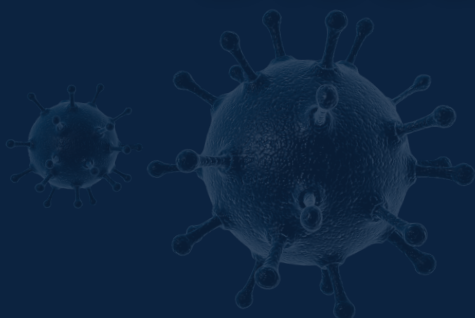




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Vision And Mission

Vision

The Serious Communicable Disease Program at Emory University is a globally recognized center that leverages interprofessional partnerships to innovate health care practice for patients with special pathogens.

- Conducts innovative research
- Validates clinical practice and technology
- Translates research into practice
- Improves patient care and health care worker safety

Mission

The Serious Communicable Diseases Unit at Emory University Hospital serves as a vital facility for the safe management of highly infectious diseases, adhering to stringent protocols to protect both patients and healthcare personnel. Beyond patient care, the unit plays a crucial role in advancing education and training, as well as conducting innovative research aimed at enhancing our understanding and response to serious communicable diseases on multiple levels, from local to global.

Leadership



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REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS

CONOP PLANS

The HHS Region 4 Concept of Operations Plan (CONOP) establishes procedures for safely transporting patients with confirmed or suspected High Consequence Infectious Diseases (HCIDs) across state lines to designated Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Centers (RESPTCs), including Emory University Hospital, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, and UNC Health. The plan standardizes communication and transport protocols across eight states, while individual states maintain their own intrastate transport and notification procedures.

State and local EMS leaders contributed to developing the plan to ensure a coordinated system of care. While all EMS personnel should be able to identify, isolate, and report potential HCID cases, specialized EMS teams with advanced training and equipment are required for interstate HCID transports and associated waste management.

Ground transport is preferred over air transport. For trips longer than four hours, each state must identify secure transfer points that support decontamination, donning and doffing, waste disposal, and privacy needs. EMS agencies must also coordinate with health officials in all jurisdictions involved, maintain communication with medical teams, and arrange support or backup vehicles to manage unexpected events during transport.





CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE OF ATLANTA

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta is a nationally recognized, state-of-the-art pediatric healthcare system providing world-class care to children across Georgia and beyond. Through advanced technology, leading specialists, and a commitment to innovation, it delivers comprehensive services from routine to highly specialized care. In partnership with RESPTC at Emory University, this collaboration supports pediatric research, trainings, and innovation, enhancing care and outcomes for children and families.

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and Emory University Hospital also participated in Tranquil Passport, the largest U.S. exercise for transporting patients with highly infectious diseases. Simulated pediatric and adult patients were transported to Atlanta and cared for in two specialized units: the Special Care Unit at Arthur M. Blank Hospital, which is one of the nation's few high-level pediatric isolation units and Emory's Serious Communicable Diseases Unit, an 11-bed facility with ICU capability, specialized airflow, personal protective equipment spaces, and an on-site infectious disease lab.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION

The Emory Serious Communicable Diseases Program collaborated with the CDC's Global Health Center to provide technical assistance for the development of our Project ECHO Program. This program aims to address deficiencies in the frontline healthcare workforce relating to late diagnosis of HCIDs. During this fiscal year, our program was successful in reviewing and providing input on 10 training modules, including a disease agnostic module, Polio, Yellow Fever, Cholera, Lassa Fever, Respiratory Pathogens, Rift Valley Fever, Marburg, Mpox, and Ebola.

We additionally have engaged globally with other partners to discuss opportunities to contain outbreaks caused by HCIDs and vaccine preventable diseases. Efforts surrounding both the CDC and MoH/PATH partnership will continue to unfold in fiscal year 2026, as our program continues exploring opportunities to train frontline providers globally.



UNIT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Tranquil Passport: Testing the Nation's Special Pathogen Readiness Ahead of the FIFA World Cup

As the U.S. prepared for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, readiness for HCID became increasingly important. In June 2025, the Tranquil Passport exercise, led by the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR), tested a coordinated national response and the Portable Biocontainment Unit (PBCU). The PBCU was the first domestic resource for safely isolating and transporting patients with contagious diseases to RESPTCs, providing continuous care until they reach definitive treatment.

Emory SCDP, the UNC Health, and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta participated in the exercise, which was fully led by ASPR. The simulation involved transporting mock adult and pediatric patients to Emory University Hospital and Children's Arthur M. Blank Hospital, where teams practiced safe handoffs and specialized care. The exercise emphasized infection control, teamwork, and readiness to safely manage complex HCID cases.

ECHO Training Attendance

From September 2024 to September 2025, eight ECHO sessions reached 4,175 professionals, with peak engagement driven by topics like H5N1, Measles, and Tuberculosis.

Attendance was heavily concentrated in the Southeastern United States, led by Georgia (731), North Carolina (283), and Florida (260), alongside New York (275). The audience is highly specialized, with Infection Prevention (1,391) and Public Health (1,263) comprising over 63% of participants. This distribution highlights the program's vital role as a regional and technical authority in infectious disease and community health protocols.



SCDP BY THE NUMBERS

FY SEPT 30, 2024 - SEPT 29, 2025

OUTREACH SUMMARY

SCDP PROJECT ECHO

8 Project ECHO sessions

7,339 participants registered

4,175 attendees

57% attendance rate



EVALUATION SUMMARY

SCDP PROJECT ECHO



1,541 Total healthcare professionals trained across 7 sessions

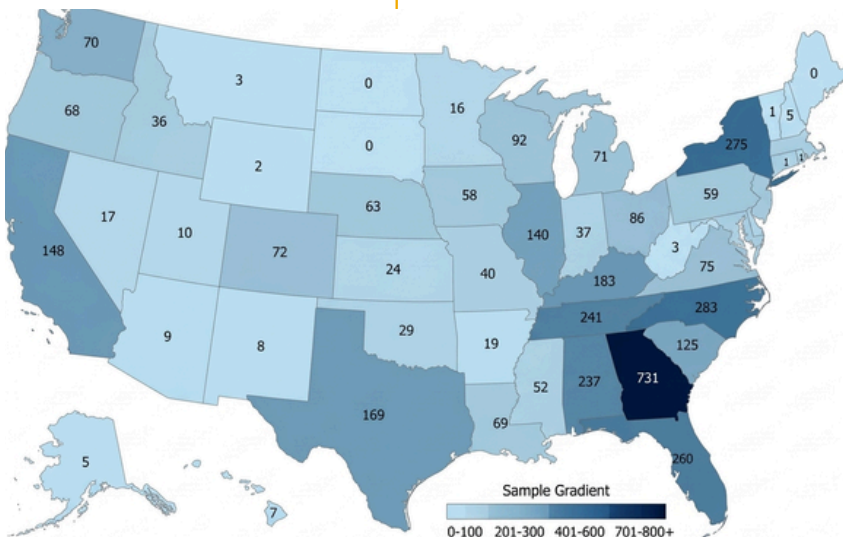
Overall Program Impact

98%	25%	19%	6%
Knowledge Increased	Skills Improved	Performance Enhanced	Patient Outcomes Impacted

99% Peak Knowledge for **Clad I** Session

33% Max Skill Growth reached in **IPC for HCID** session

In addition to the states below, 75+ international attendees from countries like Afghanistan, Brazil, Canada, India, Mexico, and the United Kingdom.



WALKTHROUGH TRAININGS

SCDP PROJECT ECHO

4 Facilities trained

- Piedmont (Athens,GA)
- Piedmont Henry (Stockbridge, GA)
- University of Louisville (Louisville, KY)
- Singing River Health Systems at Pascagoula Hospital (Pascagoula,MS)

96 Total number of people attended

22 Total hospital-based HCID training hours

13 Total walkthrough hours

19-29 attendees per site



VISION FORWARD

The Serious Communicable Diseases Program (SCDP) will strengthen its national and global impact by expanding its social media presence and deepening credibility with key audiences across healthcare, public health, and emergency preparedness.

Our vision is to serve as a trusted source for timely, accurate, and evidence-based information on emerging infectious diseases, whether they arise in the United States or abroad. By broadening our digital reach, engaging diverse communities, and consistently delivering clear, actionable guidance, we aim to elevate public awareness, support informed decision-making, and reinforce readiness across healthcare and public health systems.

A cornerstone of this work is our leadership within the National Special Pathogen System (NSPS). The NSPS Level 2 Resource Guide developed in collaboration with NETEC, supports Level 2 healthcare facilities (Special Pathogen Treatment Centers) in achieving and sustaining the 11 NSPS minimum capability domains. This guide serves as a practical educational tool, offering Q&A sections, curated resources, and implementation guidance tailored to the unique needs of each facility, ultimately strengthening national preparedness and response capacity.

Looking ahead, SCDP will also continue proactive public and professional education efforts tied to major global event. By providing timely information on infectious disease prevention, mitigation strategies, and treatment considerations, we will help communities and healthcare systems remain vigilant, informed, and prepared.

Through strategic communication, national collaboration, and evidence-driven guidance, SCDP will advance readiness, promote best practices, and strengthen resilience against high-consequence infectious diseases today and into the future.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Serious Communicable Diseases Program extends its sincere appreciation to all partners, collaborators, and stakeholders who contribute to our mission of strengthening preparedness and response to high-consequence infectious diseases. We are grateful for your continued support, expertise, and dedication, as your commitment to advancing public health and protecting communities is invaluable.

We would also like to recognize the following individuals for their leadership and contributions:

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