IMPACT ON NAVAJO NATION

20TH Anniversary of Hantavirus – the 1993 Outbreak Response

Herman Shorty, Director
Office of Environmental Health
Navajo Division of Health

For

2013 ARIZONA INFECTIOUS DISEASE TRAINING & EXERCISE
July 24, 2013
Black Canyon Conference Center - Phoenix
Impact was Tremendous:

* Loss of Family Members / Community Members
* Unexplained Loss (Why)
* Unfair & Insensitive Media Conveyance (Sensationalism)
* Economic Impact (Tourism)
* Changed Things: Protocols; Informational (Clinical, Health & Safety, Manufacturing, etc.)
* Cultural Affirmation
Unfair & Insensitive Media Conveyance (Sensationalism):

* “The Mystery Illness”

* “The Four Corners Disease”

* “Navajo Flu”

* “Navajo Disease”
Unfair & Insensitive Media Conveyance (Sensationalism): The Results

- It created a climate where Navajo were turned away from restaurants and Navajo Children were asked for health certificates when arriving at summer camps.

- Children on out of state school field trips were turned away at their destinations: Amusement Parks, Hotel, etc., cancelled through no fault of their own.

- Prejudice / Discrimination unfairly upon the innocent.
Unfair & Insensitive Media Conveyance (Sensationalism): The Results

“*ATTENTION* If you have fever along with muscle aches and pains, please stay in your car and we examine you there.”
Response:

- Epidemiological
- Survey Questionnaire Format Adjustment
- Survey Team Protocol Adjustments
- Insertion of Tribal Liaisons
- Field Investigation
- Confirmation = Validity of Approach
- Training of Others
Field Investigation: Trapping, Collection of tissue samples ("Slicing & Dicing")
IMPACT ON NAVAJO NATION
20TH Anniversary of Hantavirus – 1993 Outbreak Response
2013 Arizona Infectious Disease Training & Exercise
July 24, 2013

Field Investigation: Trapping, Collection of tissue samples (“Slicing & Dicing”)
Field Investigation: Trapping, Collection of tissue samples ("Slicing & Dicing")
IMPACT ON NAVAJO NATION
20TH Anniversary of Hantavirus – 1993 Outbreak Response
2013 Arizona Infectious Disease Training & Exercise
July 24, 2013

Field Investigation: Trapping, Collection of tissue samples ("Slicing & Dicing")
Field Investigation: Trapping, Collection of tissue samples ("Slicing & Dicing")
Field Investigation: Trapping, Collection of tissue samples (“Slicing & Dicing”)
Field Investigation: Trapping, Collection of tissue samples ("Slicing & Dicing")
Field Investigation: Trapping, Collection of tissue samples (“Slicing & Dicing”)
Field Investigation: Trapping, Collection of tissue samples (“Slicing & Dicing”)


B. Schematic representation of a trapping web showing the relative locations of the 148 trap stations. Small circles indicate the location of one Sherman trap, larger circles, one Sherman plus one Tomahawk trap. Diameter of the web was 200 m. After Parameter et al.

Unsung Heroes: There were plenty

* Clinicians and Health Care Professionals,

* CHR’s (Community Health Representatives)

* Health Education Programs

* Public Health Nursing

* Environmental Health Offices
Unsung Heroes: The real heroes

* Control homes (home sites/campsites);

* Two per case homes;

* One at or within a mile; &

* One at or within five miles

* Each subject to the same protocol of the case home site.
Changed Things: Protocols; Informational (Clinical, Health & Safety, Manufacturing, etc.)

- Greatly improved or opened avenues for communication & sharing of information in the medical & clinical community.

- Mobile Home Construction Industry (Reduced larger diameter drilled holes for plumbing & electrical or fillings to reduce rodent entry points)
Changed Things: Protocols; Informational (Clinical, Health & Safety, Manufacturing, etc.)

- Changes in operational procedures:
- Utility workers (Phone, Electrical, etc.)
- National Parks Services,
- Small Mammal Trapping Programs, e.g., Los Alamos Laboratory's trapping in canyons in close proximity, etc.
- New clean-up and monitoring messages.
Thank you

Herman Shorty, Director
Office of Environmental Health
Navajo Division of Health
P.O. Box 1390
Window Rock, Arizona 86515

(505) 870-9002 (mobile)
herman.shorty@nndoh.org