

Biosurveillance: Nonfederal Capabilities Should Be Considered in Creating a National Biosurveillance Strategy



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BIOSURVEILLANCE: NONFEDERAL CAPABILITIES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN CREATING A NATIONAL BIOSURVEILLANCE STRATEGY

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Createspace. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 102 pages. Dimensions: 11.0in. x 8.5in. x 0.2in. The nation is at risk for a catastrophic biological event. The Implementing Recommendations of the 911 Commission Act directed GAO to report on biosurveillance--to help detect and respond to such events--at multiple jurisdictional levels. In June 2010, GAO recommended that the National Security Staff lead the development of a national biosurveillance strategy, which is now under development. This report focuses on nonfederal jurisdictions, which own many of the resources that support a national capability. It discusses (1) federal support for state and local biosurveillance; (2) state and local challenges; (3) federal support and challenges for tribal and insular areas and (4) federal assessments of nonfederal capabilities. To conduct this work, GAO interviewed select federal-agency, jurisdiction, and association officials and reviewed relevant documents. To collect information on federal efforts and challenges, we also sent standardized questionnaires to seven states and two cities. The federal government has efforts to support health preparedness that state and city officials identified as critical to their biosurveillance capabilities. The efforts these officials identified fell into four categories: (1) grants and cooperative agreements, (2) nonfinancial technical and material assistance, (3) guidance, and (4) information sharing. Within each of the categories, the officials identified specific federal efforts that were essential to their biosurveillance activities. Because the resources that constitute a national biosurveillance capability are largely owned by nonfederal entities, a national strategy that considers how to leverage nonfederal efforts could improve efforts to build and maintain a national biosurveillance capability. State and city officials identified common challenges to developing and maintaining their biosurveillance capabilities: (1) state policies that restrict hiring, travel, and training in response to budget constraints; (2) ensuring adequate workforce, training, and systems; and (3) the lack...

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