



Institute for Community Health

A collaboration of the Cambridge Health Alliance, Mount Auburn Hospital, and Partners Healthcare

2006 AMERICAN EVALUATION ASSOCIATION

Public health readiness: Development of a multi-year emergency preparedness evaluation tool for local public health departments in Massachusetts.

Bryan Hall, MP.

Evaluation is an essential element in the assessment of a community's ability to respond to an emergency. As demands on local public health have increased, so too has the need to have effective means to measure preparedness in responding to public health emergencies. The Institute for Community Health has developed a comprehensive survey tool that gathers information about 27 public health departments in Massachusetts and their communities and the progress they have made towards emergency preparedness. In addition, the Institute has developed an "Index of Readiness" based on six main areas of preparedness to create an overall "preparedness" score. Few efforts have been put into evaluating emergency preparedness activities, and the capacity assessment survey tool and Index of Readiness are the first of its kind in this area. The evaluation tools are flexible, robust, timely, and have been designed to be used by other communities in the state and nation.