

(This outline should be adapted as needed for the purpose of clear, concise communication)

Cover page should include the following:

Date Written:

Release Date:

To:

From:

Report Co-authors:

Peer Reviewers:

Date Reported:

Reported By:

Person Contacted:

Also Contacted:

First page of report:

1. Introduction

- a. Date and time notification was received by your agency
- b. Describe the context of the outbreak:
 - Who → population affected
 - Where → location / place / setting
 - When → Time of onset
 - What → describe clinical findings
 - Why → suspected or known etiology or risk factors
- c. Date and time investigation was initiated by the agency
- d. Describe the primary objective(s) of the investigation

2. Background

- a. Brief scientific background on the disease and/or suspected etiologic agent

3. Investigation Methods

- a. Epidemiologic:
 - Initial investigation methods including interviews, site visits, conference calls, etc.
 - Case definition
 - Data collection (case-finding and line listing, medical record reviews)
 - Data analysis methods (e.g., descriptive epi, hypothesis generating interviews, cohort or case-control studies, other epidemiological data collection and analysis)
- b. Microbiological/toxicological
 - Laboratories involved.
 - Type of clinical specimens and sources
 - Laboratory methods
- c. Environmental
 - Review reports developed by environmental responders
 - Describe any trace back investigations that were done (e.g. food products, etc.)
 - Describe any environmental specimens collected

4. Results

- a. Epidemiological- descriptive epidemiology results including:
 - Cases
 1. Demographic data
 2. Clinical data (symptoms, signs, duration of illness, incubation period.
 3. Outcome of illness (hospitalization, death, chronic effects)
 - Location of cases (facility, county, city, etc.)
 - Epidemic curve and other graphs
 - Compare characteristics of cases and controls, if applicable
 - Describe exposed population, if applicable
 - Describe the results of analytical studies
- b. Microbiological/toxicological
 - Number and nature of specimens submitted for testing and results of laboratory testing
- c. Environmental
 - Describe observations and pertinent findings from environmental investigation(s)
 - Describe the results of trace-back investigations

- Results of environmental testing (if any)
- 5. Limitations of the study**
 - a. Discuss any factors that limited the investigation such as (small number of cases, poor information, late reporting, limited resources to conduct investigation, etc.)
- 6. Conclusion / Discussion:** Analysis and interpretation of the investigation results and any conclusions drawn as a result of this investigation
 - a. Discuss the main hypothesis
 - b. Describe the likely causative agent and mode of transmission.
 - c. Describe the risk factors
 - d. Explain what was done to control the outbreak.
 - e. Describe the conclusions and actions taken
- 7. Discuss lessons learned and recommendations for controlling disease and/or preventing/mitigating exposure:**
 - a. Recommendations to improve investigation and management of such outbreaks in the future
 - b. Measures to prevent similar outbreaks in the future
 - c. Educational message to the public, public health professionals and policy makers.

Additional instructions:

- Outbreak report should be completed within one month of outbreak closure.
- A final outbreak report is required for all outbreaks. Outbreak report templates may be used for most outbreaks. A more detailed report written following these guidelines should be used in the following situations:
 - Complex outbreaks for which the template cannot effectively describe the outbreak
 - Any outbreak in which an analytical study was done
 - The decision to write a detailed outbreak report in any outbreak should be made on a case-by-case basis
- Please be careful not to mention any personal or entity identifying information
- Refrain from attributing any specific info to a specific individual
- Reports should be written objectively based on scientific data
- Cite references used