



MARK B HORTON, MD, MSPH  
*Director*

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
California Department of Public Health



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
*Governor*

Dear Colleague:

This is to advise you that the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) in collaboration with the California Primary Care Association (CPCA), the California Association of Health Facilities (CAHF), and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), is launching a program to enroll clinics, skilled nursing facilities, and Indian Health clinics in the California Health Alert Network (CAHAN). CAHAN, the State of California's official health emergency alerting system, is a secure web-based alerting and notification system that facilitates alerting, collaboration, emergency planning, and response communication among health care providers, federal, state, and local government, and other public health emergency partners.

Over the past year, in collaboration with California's 61 local health departments (LHDs), and with the support of the California Hospital Association (CHA), CDPH held workshops across the state to enroll licensed general acute care hospitals in California to the CAHAN system. Currently, over 16,000 participants from many public and private organizations are enrolled in CAHAN. Some LHDs have already enrolled health care facilities in their jurisdiction in CAHAN. This year, CDPH will enroll clinics, skilled nursing facilities, and Indian Health clinics along with remaining hospitals.

Once enrolled, health care facilities and public health partners have the ability to receive and confirm CAHAN alerts from CDPH and LHDs during emergencies, urgent events, and disasters, and transmit relevant information about emergency issues to public health and emergency partners. CAHAN alerts are accessible via alphanumeric pager, email, fax, cellular and landline phones on a 24/7/365 basis. In addition to alerts, CAHAN also provides a central collaborative work environment for health and medical emergency partners to securely share and store confidential and sensitive information. CDPH's Licensing and Certification Division will use CAHAN to communicate directly with the health care facilities it regulates and licenses to send documents such as All Facility Letters (AFLs). CDPH will also use CAHAN to send advisories from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Providing the Licensing and Certification Division with this alerting capability does not change the SEMS (Standardized Emergency Management System) structure, the role of the Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator (MHOAC), or local responsibility to manage disasters. However, it is important that Licensing and Certification have the ability to communicate through a secure electronic environment with the health care facilities it licenses.

CDPH's Emergency Preparedness Office, which administers CAHAN, will provide CAHAN training workshops throughout the state at no charge. We encourage representatives from LHDs, clinics, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and Indian Health clinics to attend the CAHAN workshops. Participants will learn how to receive and confirm an alert and use CAHAN to enhance statewide communications among emergency and public health partners. Workshops will begin in January 2009 and will be offered throughout the state on a regional basis through October 2009 (See Enclosure). All workshop participants can view the workshop schedule and register at [www.cahanworkshops.com](http://www.cahanworkshops.com). If you are unable to attend a workshop in your area, or it is full, consider attending any of the other workshops.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important effort that will assist with public health preparedness for the people of California by ensuring immediate alerting and notification is available between public health partners.

If you have any questions or would like more information about this effort, please email [cahaninfo@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:cahaninfo@cdph.ca.gov) or contact Gigi P. Scott, CAHAN Unit Chief, at (916) 319-8182.

Sincerely,



Elisabeth H. Lyman  
Deputy Director  
Public Health Emergency Preparedness



Kathleen Billingsley, RN  
Deputy Director  
Center for Healthcare Quality

Enclosure

CAHAN Training Workshop Schedule

cc: CDPH Licensing and Certification Branch Chiefs  
CDPH Licensing and Certification District Managers  
CDPH Laboratory Field Services Supervisors  
Medical Health Operational Area Coordinators (MHOACs)  
Regional Disaster Medical Health Specialists (RDMHSs)  
Regional Disaster Medical Health Coordinators (RDMHCs)  
Local Public Health Officers  
California Health Executives/Directors  
Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA)  
Local Emergency Medical Services Authority (LEMSA)  
Health Alert Network (HAN) Coordinators  
California Association of Health Facilities (CAHF)  
Department of Health Care Services, Primary & Rural Health Division  
California Primary Care Associations (CPCA)  
Hospital Preparedness Program Coordinators  
CDPH EPO Staff