



JAN 21 2011

Assistant Secretary for
Preparedness & Response
Washington, D.C. 20201

Patricia Quinlisk, M.D., M.P.H.
Chair, National Biodefense Science Board
State Epidemiologist and Medical Director
Iowa Department of Public Health
321 East 12th Street
Lucas State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319-0075

Dear Dr. Quinlisk and Members of the National Biodefense Science Board (NBSB):

The response efforts conducted during recent public health emergencies have revealed crucial scientific knowledge gaps. These gaps require further research intended to collect useful information to assist those impacted by the event, and to improve our capabilities for future responses. Recent public health emergencies and observed gaps are exemplified by the 2010 Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill and Haiti Earthquake, and the 2009 H1N1 Pandemic. Although these events are rare and unique, the effectiveness of responses to such events may be based on common factors encompassed within an "All-Hazards Science Response" strategy.

The US and USG have tremendous science research capabilities but applying them for public health emergencies, especially using non-traditional public health science resources, has been challenging. Key research questions, if asked and answered, could have the potential to enhance the effectiveness of the response and of future responses, and provide new insights into how to mitigate short and long term health effects of such events.

I would like the NBSB to take a role in exploring an "All Hazards Science Response" strategy, and make recommendations on a way forward by answering three key questions:

- What are the various major components of an all-hazards science response;
- How do we operationalize it; and
- What infrastructure and supporting pieces need to be put in place so it will be ready to go next time.

Given the Board's expertise in Disaster Management and other related fields, you are in the unique position of fully understanding the complexities of these response issues. I would like to have recommendations at the time of your next scheduled public meeting in April 2011.

I look forward to discussing your thoughts on this topic at the January 25, 2011 NBSB public meeting.

Thank you for your diligence in ensuring the public health preparedness of our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nicole Lurie", is written over a horizontal line.

Nicole Lurie, M.D., M.S.P.H.
Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response