



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**HAWAI`I RECEIVES 9 OUT OF 10 SCORE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
PREPAREDNESS**

HONOLULU – Hawai`i received high marks in a national report released today rating each state's level of preparedness to handle disease outbreaks, bioterrorism attacks or other public health emergencies.

Hawai`i is one of 16 states rated adequate in nine out of 10 categories measured by the Trust for America's Health, a research group. Only seven states performed adequately in each of the 10 categories.

"We are continuing to make progress in emergency preparedness since the September 11, 2001 attacks, but we can still do more," said Director of Health Chiyome Fukino, M.D. "Emergency preparedness is a shared responsibility and we are continuing to get individuals and families in the community involved."

The fifth annual report, "Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health from Disease, Disasters, and Bioterrorism," said Hawai`i is among the most prepared states, having sufficient lab capability; 24-hour coverage to test for biological threats; liability laws that cover health care volunteers during emergencies; and at least 14 Medical Reserve Corps volunteers per 100,000 residents.

The report commended the state for having a high rate of flu vaccinations for residents age 65 or older and for maintaining or increasing public health funding.

(more)

The report said Hawai'i missed a perfect rating because its score for plans to distribute emergency medical supplies from a national stockpile was unavailable. However, Hawai'i scored a satisfactory rating in the Center's for Disease Control's evaluation tool for its comprehensive plan to stockpile and distribute emergency medication and supplies, and therefore should have received 10 out of 10.

While the report found scores for all 50 states have risen since the 2006 report, it noted that critical areas of the nation's emergency health preparedness effort still require attention.

The "Ready or Not?" report contains state-by-state health preparedness scores based on 10 key indicators to assess health emergency preparedness capabilities. All 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia were evaluated. The report was released by the non-profit Trust for America's Health, which works to make disease prevention a national priority.

The report and state-by-state materials are available at: www.healthyamericans.org

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