



Meta-Leadership
Summit for
Preparedness

News Release

CONTACT

Kate Ruddon
(404) 653-0790, (404) 931-4396 (cell)
kruddon@cdcfoundation.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 30, 2009

As Flu Threat Mounts, Boston Leaders Gather for Summit on Crisis Response

Boston – Mayor Thomas M. Menino and more than 200 local leaders are gathering April 30 and May 1 for the Boston Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness – part of a national initiative to bring business, government and nonprofit leaders together to better prepare and respond to public health and safety emergencies. The escalating international H1N1 (swine) flu crisis heightens the relevance of the summit and underscores the importance of citywide cross-sector planning for emergencies.

The Summit, hosted by Mayor Menino, will take place at the Sheraton Boston. The Mayor will speak to Summit participants at 12:00 p.m. on May 1. CDC Acting Director Dr. Richard Besser will deliver a remote message following the Mayor's remarks.

The Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness is a national initiative to hone leadership skills needed during times of crisis and to strengthen the network of people and organizations ready to act cooperatively in an emergency. The nation's response to events like Hurricane Katrina and 9/11 as well as the evolving H1N1 flu threat highlight the importance of leaders being ready to collaborate and share information and resources during major public health emergencies.

"The only way that we'll be adequately prepared to deal with an unanticipated emergency is to bring together leaders from all sectors to take part in the planning process," Mayor Menino says. "From government agencies to businesses and the nonprofit sector, we all have an important role to play, and this summit highlights our shared responsibilities. The preparation that this summit promotes will be key to responding to future emergencies of any size."

The Meta-Leadership Summits were launched by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Foundation, CDC, the National Preparedness Leadership Initiative* - Harvard School of Public Health, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to foster greater cross-sector collaboration during emergencies. The Boston Meta-Leadership Summit is the 7th in a series of summits planned to engage leaders across the country. Previous summits were held in Columbus, GA; Wichita, KS; Denver, CO; Louisville, KY; Princeton, NJ; and Chicago, IL. Additional

summits are planned for Dallas, TX, the National Capital Region, the state of Maryland and more than 30 other states and metropolitan areas.

“Boston leaders could not be gathering at a more important time to prepare for unprecedented challenges facing their city and state,” says Charles Stokes, president and CEO of the CDC Foundation. “The Summit will strengthen connections across all sectors and facilitate the exchange of new ideas and resources to enhance Boston’s readiness and resiliency for what WHO Director General Margaret Chan has called a ‘global threat to humanity’.”

During the Summit, attendees will practice skills necessary for effective action during emergencies; learn how to reach decisions in the face of uncertainty and stress; and identify partnerships that can be leveraged before, during and after a crisis.

They also will discuss preparedness needs and opportunities among the business, government and nonprofit sectors in Boston and ways each sector can improve its level of readiness. Participants will discuss how they can better share resources and communicate among one another and across organizations after the Boston Meta-Leadership Summit.

The CDC Foundation is an independent, nonprofit enterprise that forges effective partnerships between CDC and others to fight threats to health and safety.

###

Members of the media are invited to attend the Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness on Friday, May 1 from 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at the Sheraton Boston, 39 Dalton Street, Grand Ballroom, Boston, MA 02199.

For more information about the summit visit www.meta-leadershipsummit.org.

**NPLI is a joint program of the Harvard School of Public Health and the Kennedy School of Government.*