

Plenary Session – The Value of Standardization During a Crisis Response

Presented by Lieutenant General Ronald Place

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Session starts with a photo of the USS Teddy Roosevelt in Vietnam, March 2020. The beginning of a major outbreak affecting the military. The ship was docked in Guam for over 2 months. Decision makers at the Pentagon had to think about the issues of how COVID would affect the US military (keeping people on their missions). What to do? Testing of the military. Leadership had to make the right decisions on how to do testing and how to communicate information.

Department of Defense (DoD) is one of the largest clinical laboratory providers in the US. 305 medical labs across the world with 3000+ working individuals. There were gaps that needed to be addressed:

1. Nomenclature – What you call things. Use common naming system,
 - Middle of a 5-year refresh for new Medical Electronic Health System
 - Update new and legacy health systems
2. Supply Chain
 - Standardize how supplies were purchased – reagents, equipment, etc.
 - Contracts to do in-house or out-source.
3. Transparency
 - Communicate within DoD
 - Communicate with local communities
 - Post data daily
4. Maintain readiness
 - Access to testing at many locations
5. Sustainability
 - Maintain equipment
 - Computer upgrades
 - People's health
 - People's lives
 - Disruption of supplies
6. Leadership – Everyone's responsibility
 - Able to explain and manage risks
 - Trust – Be trustworthy
 - Embracing transparency – Do not hold on to information. Share information so stake holders can act on it together.

In summary, the whole system should be on the same page. Listen to the truth. When you get information, act on it. Nothing is perfect. It is better than doing nothing. When a crisis arises do something and keep calm. Be open to change. Collective knowledge is better than just one person.