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CDC Releases Strategic Plan for Emerging Infectious Diseases

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has released *Addressing Emerging Infectious Disease Threats: A Prevention Strategy for the United States*. The executive summary of this plan was published in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.¹ The report summarizes the experience with a number of diseases posing serious threats to public health, such as the newly recognized hantavirus linked to a highly fatal pulmonary syndrome; the intestinal parasite, *Cryptosporidium*, causing the largest recognized outbreak of waterborne illness in U.S. history; an increasing incidence of drug resistance in community-acquired pneumococcal infections, linked to childcare centers and prior antibiotic use; and a newly described toxigenic *Vibrio cholerae* 0139 that

emerged in southern Asia.

Three recent reports from the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine point out that the ability of the U.S. public health system to deal with emerging infectious disease problems is in serious jeopardy.^{2,4} To detect and prevent emerging infections effectively, significant improvements are needed in the public health systems, program design, and infrastructure. Because meeting this challenge requires cooperation among a wide range of public and private organizations, the CDC has developed its prevention strategy in partnership with other federal agencies, state and local health departments, academic institutions, professional societies, international organizations, and experts in public health, infectious disease, and medical microbiology.

The CDC plan contains four critical goals: surveillance, applied

research, prevention and control, and public health infrastructure. Single copies of the plan are available from the CDC's National Center for Infectious Disease, Office of Program Resources—EP, Mailstop C-14, 1600 Clifton Rd. NE, Atlanta, GA 30333.

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