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ADMINISTRATION FOR STRATEGIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE (ASPR)

NETEC
NATIONAL EMERGING SPECIAL PATHOGENS
TRAINING AND EDUCATION CENTER

Safeguarding America's National Health Security

Annual Report FY2025



INTRODUCTION



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The **National Emerging Special Pathogens Training and Education Center (NETEC)** is excited to share its FY2025 annual report, highlighting another year of impactful contributions to the nation's preparedness against special pathogens. Throughout the past year, NETEC has continued to strengthen national security and public health by promoting best practices, addressing critical knowledge gaps, and empowering healthcare professionals to effectively respond to high-consequence infectious diseases. In collaboration with the Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Centers (RESPTCs), NETEC has created a robust national system composed of a coordinated, decentralized network of clinical biocontainment units. This network exemplifies the power of targeted federal investments in enhancing local and regional readiness. By building lasting infrastructure and nurturing a culture of preparedness within the U.S. healthcare system, NETEC ensures that communities, states, and the nation remain equipped to safeguard the American public from biological threats.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS HIGHLIGHTED IN THIS REPORT INCLUDE:

2024 LASSA FEVER CASE: The 2024 Lassa fever case in Iowa tested NETEC's readiness and national coordination. The event showcased NETEC's ability to respond quickly and collaborate globally. It also highlighted areas for improvement, including communication, resource deployment, and expert coordination.

NSPS: ADVANCING NATIONAL READINESS: The National Special Pathogen System (NSPS) transitioned from strategic planning to implementation—delivering core tools, operational guidance, and systemwide coordination that advanced national readiness for high-consequence infectious disease response.

FIFA WORLD CUP 2026: NETEC showcased its expertise through national exercises, including a tabletop exercise and support for the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR)'s Tranquil Passport** full-scale exercise. These efforts further strengthened special pathogen readiness and preparedness for global events like the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS & PROGRAMS: International Partnerships & Programs (IPP) strengthened global collaboration through expert forums, international engagements, formalizing agreements through Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), and training with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), boosting NETEC's visibility as a global leader in special pathogens preparedness.

METRICS AND CONSULTATION: In FY2025, NETEC's Metrics and Consultations advanced national special pathogen readiness through comprehensive readiness assessments, tailored improvement plans, and technical assistance. NETEC reinforced the NSPS by validating strengths and identifying opportunities for advancement at all 13 Level 1 RESPTCs.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING: NETEC enhanced national readiness by providing accessible, high-quality education to the healthcare workforce through digital and hands-on training, empowering frontline providers and reinforcing its leadership in special pathogens preparedness.

SPECIAL PATHOGENS RESEARCH NETWORK (SPRN): The SPRN enabled rapid multisite clinical research within 72 hours, enhancing regulatory readiness and supporting real-time decision making on investigational therapies during special pathogen events.

This year's achievements highlight NETEC's vital role in safeguarding public health and strengthening national security. By connecting federal resources with local expertise, NETEC enhances healthcare resilience, protects American lives, and fosters economic stability. Together, we are building a safer, more prepared future for everyone.

NETEC

NETEC Response to the Lassa Fever Case

Validated Readiness in a Real-World Event

In fall 2024, a confirmed case of Lassa fever in Iowa tested the operational readiness of NETEC and the broader NSPS. Though the case resulted in a single fatality and no secondary transmission, it marked a significant real-world event that demonstrated the strength of NETEC's national coordination and leadership.

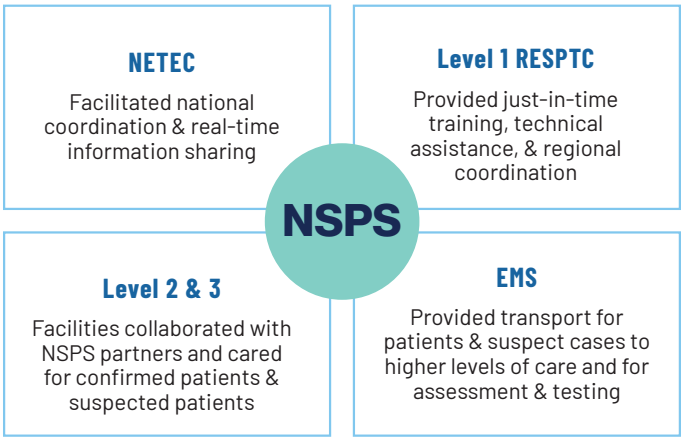
The University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC)—the Region 7 Level 1 RESPTC—and the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit (NBU) deployed a team to Iowa to aid local response efforts, providing technical assistance for healthcare facilities and EMS agencies in Region 7. The RESPTC served as a trusted source of situational knowledge and prepared regional and national systems for potential spread through coordination with NETEC, as the coordinating body for the NSPS. Members of the Region 7 RESPTC joined daily Iowa briefings and relayed priorities and response strategies to NETEC, regional leaders, and SMEs. NETEC SMEs from other Level 1 RESPTCs supported EMS agencies and healthcare partners through tailored readiness assessments and targeted resource deployment. NETEC also facilitated knowledge exchange with international partners in the UK, Germany, Singapore, and Japan, reinforcing global collaboration.

NETEC's rapid mobilization, effective communication with federal partners (CDC, ASPR), and delivery of educational tools, assessment checklists, and centralized guidance underscored the value of a connected, responsive system. Region 7's pre-existing readiness—bolstered by their RESPTC/NBU—played a critical role in supporting containment efforts.

However, NETEC identified several opportunities for improvement, including expanding the bench of SMEs, improving internal communication, enhancing coordination between research and response functions, and clarifying information-sharing protocols. The case also reinforced the importance of strong partnerships, agile resource deployment, and continued investment in scenario-based response planning.

As a result of this event, NETEC will prioritize developing a national concept of operations (CONOPS), establishing a formalized incident command structure for special pathogen events, and packaging disease-specific response materials for rapid dissemination. The Lassa response highlighted NETEC's maturity as a national health security asset—and its commitment to continually refining readiness and response across the U.S. healthcare system.

NSPS Response to U.S. Lassa Fever Case



Ready to Respond

Prepared to Activate

Iowa hospitals & EMS practiced similar scenarios together and with the Level 1 facility in Omaha

Long-Standing Relationships

NSPS partners in HHS Region 7 built a foundation of trust that enabled quick coordinated response

NSPS Coordination

All levels of the NSPS, from Level 1-4, EMS, and public health coordinated a rapid, united response

NETEC

NSPS: Advancing National Readiness

From Strategy to Systemwide Impact

The National Special Pathogen System (NSPS) transitioned from strategic planning to implementation—delivering core tools, operational guidance, and systemwide coordination that advanced national readiness for high-consequence infectious disease response.

Defined Capabilities and Resources for NSPS Facilities

NSPS finalized alignment around minimum capabilities across Levels 1–4 of the tiered system, creating greater clarity for implementation across healthcare settings. To support adoption, NSPS defined a suite of resources—checklists, training modules, webinars, and infographics—tailored to each capability by domain.

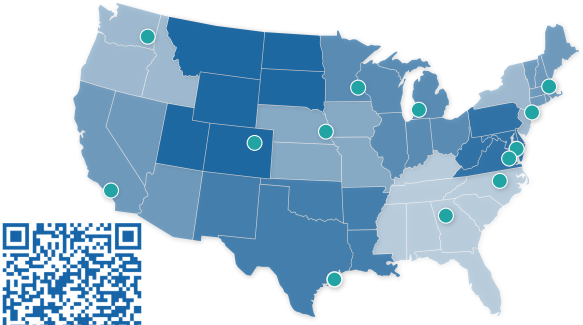
In parallel, the NSPS Costing Task Force conducted in-depth analysis with Level 2–4 facilities and created budget templates and readiness cost profiles that support future funding strategies. This work directly informed ASPR's funding strategy and award structure for Level 2 facilities, ensuring alignment with actual resource needs.

Enhanced Strategic Messaging and Data Infrastructure

In FY2025, NSPS refreshed its strategic messaging with an updated socialization deck, expanded outreach tools, and social media engagement to help RESPTCs promote the value of a national system. In tandem, a data mapping initiative prioritized key data elements to guide network goals, inform Request for Proposal (RFP) eligibility, and shape evaluation rubrics.

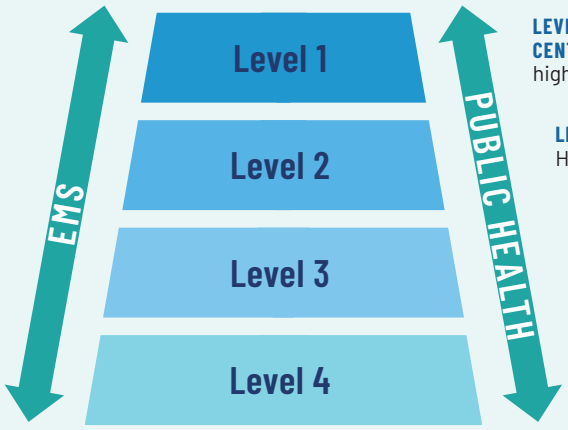
These efforts supported a broader shift toward formal system infrastructure. Building on this foundation, NSPS leadership also finalized a decision to move toward a national verification model, similar to the trauma and burn systems. Through a series of workshops, leaders outlined the overall strategy, governance structure, alignment with NETEC, and discussed a revenue model. While advancement of a national system with verification has been outlined, implementation detail and strategy will need to be defined.

Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Centers



FIND YOUR REGIONAL CONTACTS HERE.

The National Special Pathogen System (NSPS)



LEVEL 1 facilities, or **REGIONAL EMERGING SPECIAL PATHOGEN TREATMENT CENTERS (RESPTCs)**: Regional coordination and outreach, resources, and highly specialized care.

LEVEL 2 facilities, or **SPECIAL PATHOGEN TREATMENT CENTERS (SPTCS)**: Highly specialized care for the duration of illness.

LEVEL 3 facilities, or **ASSESSMENT CENTERS**: Short-term care, pathogen laboratory specimen collection, and rapid patient transfer to a Level 1 or 2.

LEVEL 4 facilities, or **ALL OTHER HEALTHCARE FACILITIES**: Short-term care and rapid patient transfer to a Level 1, 2 or 3.

Additional partners, such as EMS and public health, are essential for the coordination of the NSPS.

NETEC

Testing National Readiness Ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026

FEATURE

NETEC demonstrated its expertise through a series of exercises that tested nationwide activation for an outbreak occurring in a global event. NETEC conducted a national tabletop exercise and provided leadership in coordination, technical support, and evaluation in support of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR)'s Tranquil Passport full-scale exercise. These efforts enhanced the nation's special pathogen readiness by validating systems, refining capabilities, and ensuring preparedness for global mass gatherings like the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

In January 2025, NSPS hosted a national tabletop exercise simulating a special pathogen response during the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Engaging over 500 participants across 10 HHS regions, the exercise tested operational capacity and strengthened regional collaboration for mass gatherings that elevate the risk of disease transmission. Key objectives included aligning NSPS roles and responsibilities, determining notification and communication processes, and coordinating response operations, including transportation, lab testing, and clinical capacity.

In June 2025, ASPR conducted Tranquil Passport, a national full-scale exercise testing the coordinated response to a high-consequence infectious disease ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The exercise simulated cross-border patient transport, marked the first field use of the federal Portable Biocontainment Unit (PBCU), and assessed the operational strength of the NSPS. As the NSPS coordinating body,

NETEC led patient coordination, field evaluation, and technical support to ensure a successful readiness test.

NETEC played a pivotal role as a key convener, bringing together over 50 partners across federal, state, local, international, and nongovernmental sectors to plan and execute the complex exercise. Using readiness data and clinical coordination calls with healthcare institutions, public health agencies, the CDC, and ASPR, NETEC aligned clinical operations with available capacity, distributing eight exercise patients to East Coast RESPTCs. Each center received a unique and complex patient scenario to test facility-specific protocols, including obstetric care, pediatric needs, critical care, surgical services, and a provider-down event.

To evaluate the exercise, NETEC led a multidisciplinary team of 26 subject matter experts from across eight HHS regions, embedding laboratorians, nurses, physicians, and EMS professionals at key sites. Their observations informed a national evaluation of coordination, patient transport, and care delivery.

Key strengths identified in the evaluation included:

- Successful inter-jurisdictional transport and RESPTC admissions
- Clear and concise communication across local, state, and federal partners
- Real-time testing of diverse care models and infection control protocols
- New practices for integrating pediatric patients and family-centered care

Through its coordination, operational expertise, and evaluation leadership, NETEC advanced national high-consequence infectious disease preparedness and strengthened the NSPS for future large-scale events.



NETEC

International Partnerships & Programs

Strengthening Global Collaboration and Expertise

International Partnerships & Programs (IPP) expanded global collaboration through technical and strategic initiatives, including expert forums, high-level international engagements, and targeted training with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). These efforts reinforced NETEC's global visibility and role as a trusted leader in special pathogens preparedness.

Connected Experts Through Global Rounds

Five *Global Rounds* virtual sessions brought together 345 international experts specializing in high-consequence infectious diseases (HCIDs) and high-level isolation units (HLIUs) from 30 countries. These sessions covered important topics such as HCID transportation, pediatric care in high-level isolation, and lessons learned from the Marburg outbreak in Rwanda.

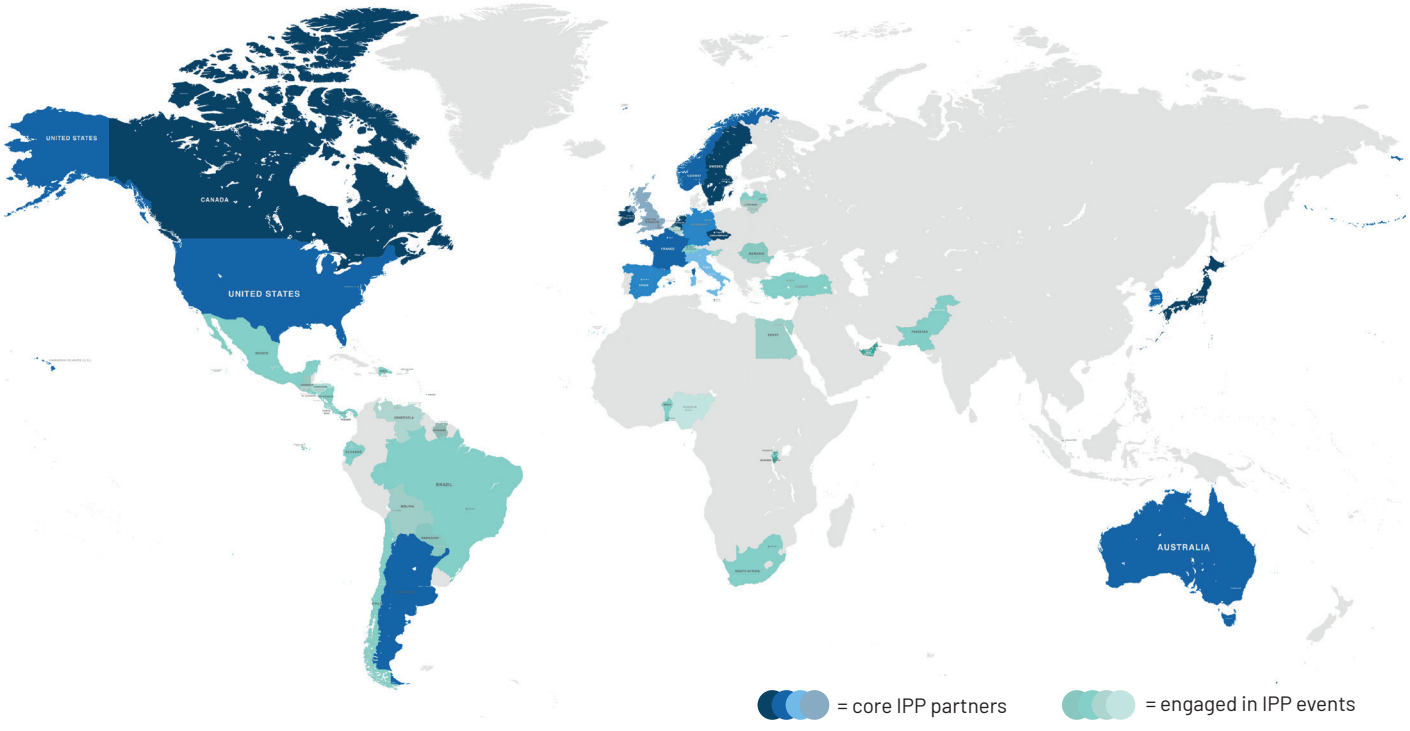
Strengthened Regional Capacity and Strategic Partnerships

In response to a request from the PAHO, NETEC supported an in-person HCID medical evacuation training workshop in Panama. This event trained Ministry of Health representatives from across Latin America and strengthened regional health security. NETEC also fostered peer-to-peer partnerships between HHS-designated Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Centers (RESPTCs) and HLIUs in Canada, South Korea, and Japan, including formalizing partnerships through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs).

Provided Technical Assistance and Global Leadership

NETEC subject matter experts provided targeted technical assistance worldwide, responding to a range of support requests. NETEC experts participated in international conferences, summits, and exercises, further elevating NETEC's global visibility and reinforcing its role as a trusted leader in special pathogen preparedness and response.

International Partnerships and Events



NETEC by the Numbers

FY2025 | July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

Education and Training



10,905 training hours delivered to **3,099** health care professionals (digital & in-person)

33 online courses (**6** new in FY25)

1,180 continuing education credits earned

5,543 hours of e-learning videos viewed

8 live webinars — reaching all **50** states & **28** countries

9 new podcast episodes — **3,255** unique listeners

Technical Assistance and Tools

282 technical assistance requests, including:

- **47** hospitals requested viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) Preparedness Checklist
- **22** Targeted Support Service (TSS) cases in collaboration with RESPTCs



Exercise and Events

NSPS World Cup Tabletop Exercise (Jan 2025): **500+** participants from **10** regions in a coordinated, multi-partner virtual event



Resource Reach



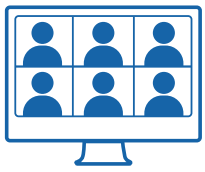
42,289 library users

232,849 pageviews

20,190 downloads

Specialized Workgroups

100+ healthcare professionals participated in **14** national NETEC workgroups



Metrics and Capability

100% of RESPTCs ready to activate units & admit VHF patients within **12** hours

98% ready to coordinate transport & deliver critical care for high-consequence infectious disease patients

92% ready to conduct diagnostic testing for special pathogens/VHF



International Partnerships and Programs

56 countries represented in NETEC activities

345 experts from **30** countries in **5** Global Rounds



NETEC

Metrics and Consultation

Assessing U.S. Hospitals' Special Pathogen Readiness

NETEC's Metrics and Consultation advanced national special pathogen readiness through comprehensive readiness assessments, tailored improvement plans, and technical assistance. NETEC reinforced the National Special Pathogen System (NSPS) by validating strengths and identifying opportunities for advancement at all 13 Level 1 Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Centers (RESPTCs).



Assessed Operational Readiness Across the NSPS

NETEC monitored the operational readiness of all 13 RESPTCs to activate and deliver care for up to two viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) patients within 12 hours. Over a 12-month period, RESPTCs demonstrated 92–100% operational readiness across activation, transport, clinical care, and laboratory testing.

Expanded Support for the National Network

NETEC's 282 engagements with hospitals, EMS agencies, and health partners in all 10 HHS regions strengthened the NSPS beyond Level 1 facilities. Through virtual consultations, readiness checklists, leadership toolkits, and targeted assessments, NETEC helped advance readiness at multiple system levels—broadening the reach and reinforcing the structure of the system.

Addressed Readiness Gaps and Drove Engagement

NETEC collaborated with RESPTCs to deliver 22 Targeted Support Services (TSS) engagements across the HHS Regions. These cross-regional efforts provided tailored technical assistance to healthcare facilities, addressing key gaps in preparedness and strengthening regional coordination.

Repeat and referral-based engagements reflect the trust NETEC has built across the healthcare community. Some hospitals submitted multiple TSS cases within the year, while others were referred by public health departments or system leaders. A Region 9 tabletop exercise led to five additional requests, including EMS and laboratory consultations, and prompted further outreach from labs seeking support to enhance HCID specimen processing.

Snapshot of Readiness

Monthly RESPTC Readiness Reports

100% Activation readiness

>98% Transport and care readiness

>92% Lab readiness

Total Consultations & Engagements

282*

* Out of 282 Total Consultation & Engagements (non-Level 1) were 47 Viral Hemorrhagic Fever Checklist requests.



NETEC

Education and Training

Training the Nation's Healthcare Workforce

NETEC strengthened the nation's capacity to respond to high-consequence infectious diseases (HCIDs) by delivering accessible, high-quality education to the healthcare workforce. Through a strategic blend of digital learning and hands-on training, NETEC advanced national readiness, empowered frontline providers, and reinforced its role as a trusted leader in special pathogens preparedness.

Delivered Robust Online Learning and Engaged Resource Users

Online learning remained a cornerstone of NETEC's strategy, offering a mix of online courses, webinars, skill-building videos, podcasts, and printable resources to deliver timely, practical training that meets the needs of healthcare professionals. Strong participation in continuing education and widespread use of NETEC's resource library reflect the ongoing demand for accessible, high-quality special pathogens education. NETEC's digital platforms also enabled broad geographic reach, engaging learners across all 50 states and globally.

Enhanced EMS Readiness Through Targeted Training

NETEC's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Workgroup supported regional delivery of the Biosafety Transport for Operators course and hosted a full-day pre-conference workshop at the National Association of EMS Physicians conference. This workshop addressed PPE use, ambulance modifications, destination planning, disinfection, waste management, and post-mission medical surveillance—key operational areas critical to EMS readiness for HCIDs.

Reintroduced In-Person, Scenario-Based Training

In collaboration with RESPTCs, NETEC successfully reintroduced in-person training. The pilot of Escape the Outbreak: Mastering Special Pathogen Response Through Interactive Training was held in San Antonio, Texas, and San Francisco, California. This immersive experience challenged participants with real-world scenarios, PPE donning/doffing practice, and expert Q&A sessions. Both sessions earned "excellent" Net Promoter Scores, with participants reporting greater confidence in applying key preparedness practices and plans to update institutional policies, conduct drills, and train others using the course materials.

Snapshot of Learning

Training Delivery

10,905 total training hours

3,099 healthcare professionals trained

33 online courses (including **6** new)

Engagement & Continuing Education

1,180 continuing education credits earned

5,543 hours of e-learning videos viewed

Resource Library Reach

42,289 unique users

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Podcast & Webinar Reach

9 new *Transmission Interrupted* podcast episodes

3,255 unique podcast listeners

8 live webinars

Participants from all **50** states and **28** countries



NETEC

Special Pathogens Research Network (SPRN)

Advancing Special Pathogens Preparedness Through Collaborative Research Excellence

The Special Pathogen Research Network (SPRN) enables rapid initiation of multisite clinical research within 72 hours, advanced regulatory readiness, and provision of real-time research activation to support swift clinical decision making on investigational therapies during special pathogen events—proven as a critical component of the U.S. special pathogen response system.

The SPRN is dedicated to establishing and maintaining critical infrastructure that assures capacity for the rapid conduct of clinical research across the network. The following are highlights from SPRN's four specialized workgroups.

Demonstrated Ability to Rapidly Mobilize Research During Outbreaks

The Ethical Conduct of Special Pathogens Human Subjects Research Workgroup executed an expanded access protocol for monoclonal antibody therapy during the 2024 Marburg virus disease outbreak—building on a similar approach used for Sudan virus disease. The protocol was approved across 12 RESPTCs and the NIH Clinical Center, reflecting coordination among Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), MappBio, UNMC's single Institutional Review Board (IRB), and RESPTC investigators. This work ensures that patients and providers can access investigational countermeasures when needed most.

Expanded Research Infrastructure Across the RESPTC Network

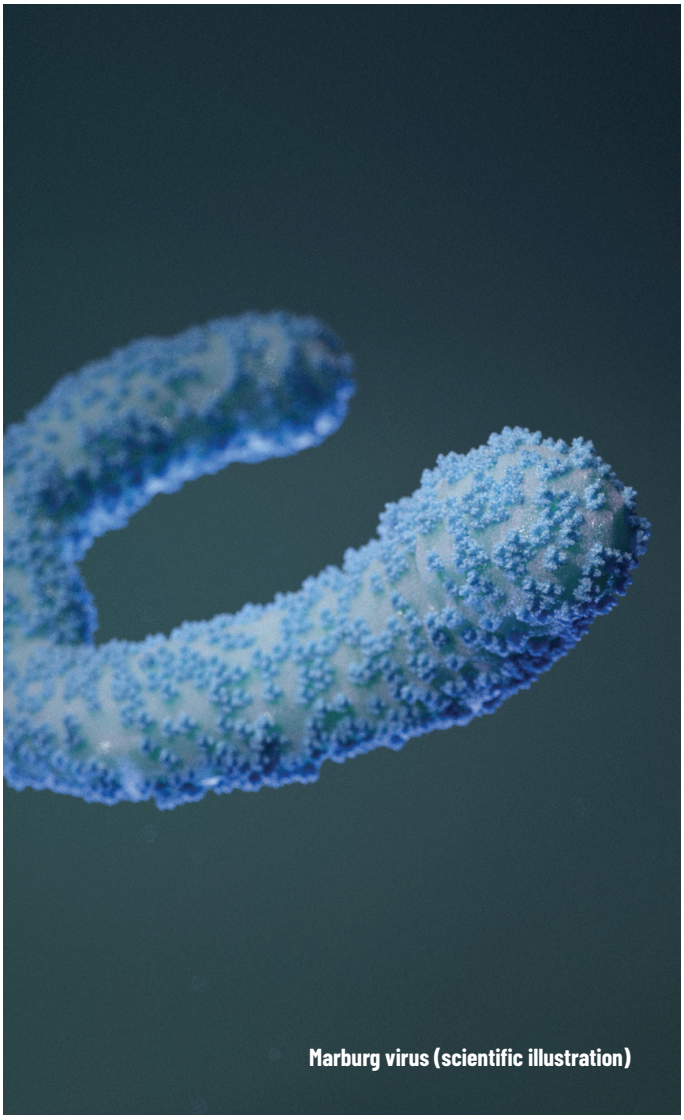
The Basic and Translational State of the Science workgroup advanced key initiatives, including enrollment of multiple RESPTC sites in the high-consequence infectious diseases (HCIDs) vaccine protocol and development of a network-wide biorepository. A biorepository charter and standardized material transfer language are now in progress to support this shared resource. Preparedness and response considerations for HCIDs were published to support readiness for the HCID patient.

Enhanced Clinical Research Leadership and Knowledge Dissemination

The Clinical State of the Science Workgroup proposed a 12-manuscript special supplement for *Clinical Infectious Diseases* and published updated Nipah virus clinical guidance. Ongoing collaborations with UpToDate so frontline clinicians have access to current, evidence-based information for rare, high-impact diseases.

Ensured Operational Readiness for Research Activation

The Operational Readiness and Implementation workgroup strengthened capacity across all 13 RESPTCs and supported the onboarding of expanded access protocols for use of Ebola Sudan and Marburg virus medical countermeasures. SPRN also developed templated just-in-time training resources to streamline future protocol deployment during emergency response.



Marburg virus (scientific illustration)

NETEC

National Workgroups

Strengthening National Readiness Through Collaborative Expertise and Action

NETEC's workgroups converted national strategy into operational capability—producing practical tools, delivering consultations, coordinating exercises, and supporting real-world events. Their integrated efforts across clinical operations, EMS, laboratories, research, and education strengthened the NSPS, reinforced hospital and EMS readiness nationwide, and elevated international collaboration. These achievements underscore the indispensable role of NETEC's national workgroups and task forces in building and sustaining a resilient, verified system of care for high-consequence infectious diseases (HCIDs).

NETEC continues to drive national readiness for HCIDs through its national workgroups and task forces. These robust workgroups serve as the operational backbone of NETEC, enabling strategic advancement across clinical operations, workforce development, outbreak response, and special pathogens research. Comprising nearly 300 nationally recognized experts, workgroup membership is nomination-based and represents leadership across multiple domains of special pathogens and healthcare preparedness.

These workgroups and task forces (requiring rapid deliverables) have generated cross-cutting assets and facilitated global stakeholder engagement, resulting in tangible impact throughout the Special Pathogens ecosystem. Their contributions include Targeted Support Services (TSS) for readiness consultations, the development and dissemination of educational materials, international knowledge exchange, and the publication of scientific guidance. These efforts are further amplified by participation in national conferences, webinars, and consistent contributions to regional and national guidance and standards.

A notable collaboration within the Special Pathogens Research Network (SPRN) enabled cross-site implementation of investigational products (MBP-091 and MBP-134), showcasing coordinated efforts across protocol design, IRB submissions, regulatory compliance, and clinical operations. Inter-workgroup collaboration remains a core strength, ensuring cohesion in asset development, consultation efforts, and education delivery.

Key accomplishments include the establishment of a Concept of Operations (CONOPS)/Infectious Disease Transportation Network (IDTN) Task Force involving the EMS and Regional Coordination worlgroups; maintenance of five pathogen-specific sub-working groups and an epidemiology group; addressed emerging needs (e.g., Deployable Teams and Occupational Health for biocontainment unit (BCU) teams); completion of cornerstone resources such as the Special Pathogen Incident Planning Guide (IPG) and Incident Response Guide (IRG); development of the Special Pathogen Tracer; and participation in national-level exercises as well as real-time support for events such as the Lassa fever outbreak. Workgroups also contributed to international TSS, including consultations with Ireland and Australia.

Additional efforts include CONOPS strategies across RESPTCs, as well as the advancement of inter-regional coordination initiatives. These accomplishments highlight the indispensable role of NETEC's workgroups and task forces in building a resilient national framework for special pathogen preparedness.

NETEC Workgroups and Task Forces



CONCLUSION

In FY2025, NETEC made significant contributions to enhance national preparedness for high-consequence infectious diseases. Through advancement of the National Special Pathogen System (NSPS) and real-world responses to events such as the 2024 Lassa fever case, NETEC has demonstrated its vital role in coordinating swift, effective action. Its partnership with the Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Centers (RESPTCs) and ongoing international collaborations have strengthened both domestic and global readiness. Additionally, NETEC's support for large-scale exercises, such as preparing for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, has further ensured that the nation is increasing readiness for major international events, reinforcing our commitment to comprehensive, global preparedness.

Beyond operational readiness, NETEC's commitment to education and training has empowered healthcare professionals nationwide with the knowledge and skills necessary for rapid, informed decision-making. Our focus on research and continuous improvement further solidifies our leadership in special pathogens preparedness. As we move forward, NETEC will continue to connect federal resources with local expertise, ensuring the U.S. remains prepared for future public health challenges and safeguards the well-being of the American public.





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