

Guidance for 24/7 After-Hours Phone Service Testing of Local CHD

1. Call 411 or (area code) 555-1212 and ask for the CHD phone number so you can see what number you get. Other methods to test to obtain the correct number are the phone book and the internet. It is important to try the methods that local medical providers will try. You may want to do this every month as you will often get different people and different services. Calling from different numbers - home, cell and a work land line may also give you different results. It is important to test the phone numbers at all your local clinic sites as those numbers may already be in the community. Do all the clinic messages lead to your after-hours system?

2. Call the number you receive from “information” and see if you can EASILY follow the instructions to get to talk to someone after-hours. Make sure your message includes the phrase “urgent case report” or “reportable disease”, and that it hasn’t been accidentally changed or erased since you last tested it. If a secondary phone number is listed, is the message clear and slow enough so that someone can write it all down the first time and is the number repeated?

3. If you have a live answering service, it is good to make sure all the employees are trained and know how to follow your instructions, and that they know whether to call a list of on-call personnel or try the one on-call person on numerous phone numbers. You may want to clarify how long to wait before moving on to the next number or on-call person. Also, do they take the callers name and phone number right away and will they call back if you get disconnected?

Example:

Phone number received from information/ phone book/ internet: (____) _____ - _____

Site, i.e. main clinic, satellite clinic: _____

Day Called the CHD: _____ / _____ / _____ Weeknight / Weekend

Time you called the phone number: _____ : _____ AM/ PM

Secondary Number to Call: (____) _____ - _____

Tertiary Number to Call: (_____) _____ - _____

Answering Service: yes/ no

Name of Person at answering service: _____

Time Call Was Answered by a Person working for the CHD who can receive confidential information
_____ : _____ AM / PM

Notes: _____

Was this test successful? _____