

Emergency Management Learning Resources

An Inventory for Public Health Capacity Building



Report
August 2026

Public Health Ontario

Public Health Ontario is an agency of the Government of Ontario dedicated to protecting and promoting the health of all Ontarians and reducing inequities in health. Public Health Ontario links public health practitioners, frontline health workers and researchers to the best scientific intelligence and knowledge from around the world.

Public Health Ontario provides expert scientific and technical support to government, local public health units and health care providers relating to the following:

- communicable and infectious diseases
- infection prevention and control
- environmental and occupational health
- emergency preparedness
- health promotion, chronic disease and injury prevention
- public health laboratory services

Public Health Ontario's work also includes surveillance, epidemiology, research, professional development and knowledge services. For more information, visit publichealthontario.ca.

How to cite this document:

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Emergency management learning resources: an inventory for public health capacity building. Toronto, ON: King's Printer for Ontario; 2026.

ISBN: 978-1-4868-9986-9

© King's Printer for Ontario, 2026

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to express their sincere appreciation to members of the Ontario Public Health Emergency Management Network (OPHEMN) and local public health unit representatives across Ontario for their inputs and perspectives to this inventory.

Disclaimer

This document was developed by Public Health Ontario (PHO). PHO provides scientific and technical advice to Ontario's government, public health organizations and health care providers. PHO's work is guided by the current best available evidence at the time of publication.

The application and use of this document is the responsibility of the user. PHO assumes no liability resulting from any such application or use.

This document may be reproduced without permission for non-commercial purposes only and provided that appropriate credit is given to PHO. No changes and/or modifications may be made to this document without express written permission from PHO.

Contents

Purpose of this Document	1
Why this Work is Important.....	1
Featured Resources	2
Public Health Emergency Management Foundations	3
Risk Assessment and Emergency Planning	5
Emergency Coordination Mechanisms	8
Simulation Exercises	11
Emergency Risk Communication and Engagement	13
Mental Health and Psychosocial Support	16
Emergency Response Reviews	17
References	19
Appendix: Additional Learning Resources	23

Purpose of this Document

This document provides an inventory of learning resources to strengthen workforce capacity in public health emergency management. This includes professional development for:

- All public health agency staff (for orientation purposes)
- Professionals with dedicated roles and responsibilities in public health emergency management

Learning resources featured in this report were identified from a search of grey literature, including public health agency websites and learning portals. This search was completed as part of a situational assessment on opportunities to strengthen workforce capacity in public health emergency management. For more information on the search methods, please see the report on the situational assessment results.¹

Why this Work is Important

Strengthening public health workforce capacity is an important goal for Canada's public health system.² To align with this goal, Public Health Ontario's (PHO) strategic directions (2024–2029) include a focus on advancing public health workforce capacity. To support this strategic direction, PHO is exploring opportunities to enhance capacity building opportunities in several key areas including public health emergency management. This includes identifying available learning resources suitable for all public health agency staff and for individuals with dedicated roles and responsibilities in public health emergency management. This inventory of learning resources represents one component of a broader suite of products and resources PHO aims to share based on insights gathered from a situational assessment.¹ As this is an evolving area, this inventory will be updated on an ongoing basis.

Featured Resources

Courses or modules are organized under the following topics:

- [Public Health Emergency Management Foundations](#)
- [Risk Assessment and Emergency Planning](#)
- [Emergency Coordination Mechanisms](#)
- [Simulation Exercises](#)
- [Emergency Risk Communication and Engagement](#)
- [Mental Health and Psychosocial Support](#)
- [Emergency Response Reviews](#)

Courses are featured in the inventory if they:

- Focus on topics relevant to public health emergency management that align with the needs of Ontario public health units
- Are offered outside of degree or certification programs to provide flexible learning options
- Are accessible to professionals working in Ontario
- Include content transferable to the Ontario or the broader Canadian context

Public Health Emergency Management Foundations

This section includes learning resources that provide a broad and introductory overview of several topics including terminology and core concepts relevant to public health emergency management.

Courses are listed first if they are suited for a novice stage of learning followed by courses that are more specialized or used for refresher training.

1. Emergency Management and Public Health

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

Description: A self-paced online course with short modules, videos, interactive knowledge checks and quizzes.³ This course was developed for employees of PHAC and Health Canada; however, a lot of the content is broadly relevant to professionals working in public health at other levels of the system. The course covers foundational terminology used in public health emergency management, the emergency management continuum and the importance of the IMS for coordinating public health emergencies.

How this could be used: to orient all staff working in public health to important concepts in public health emergency management and prepare them for their potential role in a public health emergency

Length: 1.0–1.5 hours

Note: there is an emphasis on federal-level public health structures and roles and agency-specific processes

How to access: [PHAC Training Portal](#) (free to access, account registration required)

2. Introduction to Infectious Disease Preparedness Micro Learning

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

Description: A micro-learning course that includes interactive components, such as knowledge checks and links to external resources.⁴ The course focuses on emergency preparedness as applied to infectious diseases. Content covers the preparedness cycle including a focus on activities carried out at each phase (e.g., risk assessment, planning, training and capacity building, exercises and testing, revising and correcting) including response and recovery activities. The course also refers to examples of international laws and frameworks relevant to emergency preparedness in public health.

How this could be used: to provide education to public health staff and leaders who work in communicable disease control to demonstrate the linkages between their role and the preparedness cycle. As this course is an entry point for a larger set of offerings from ECDC and links to many of their tools, it can also be used as foundational education for individuals interested in professional development in specific areas including risk assessment, emergency preparedness exercises and emergency response reviews.

Length: 30 minutes

How to access: [ECDC's Learning Portal for Infectious Diseases](#) (free to access, account registration required)

3. Ready4Response Tier 1

World Health Organization (WHO)

Description: An online module that includes a series of 17 short videos, case studies and prompts for the learner to reflect on the content.⁵ The module covers terminology, principles for effective emergency management, the WHO's emergency response framework and grading scale for emergencies, the International Health Regulations, and roles and responsibilities of the health emergency landscape at national, regional and global levels. Public health relevant content and examples are incorporated throughout the content.

How this could be used: to provide education to public health professionals including leaders with dedicated roles in emergency management who may benefit from understanding the broader health emergency landscape. The module could also be used as refresher on concepts and principles in emergency management for individuals with existing training.

Length: each video is less than 10 minutes

How to access: module freely available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Ready4Response series](#). Videos are available in both English and French.

4. Basic Emergency Management (BEM) (EM 200)

Emergency Management Ontario (EMO)

Description: A course delivered virtually and in-person across Ontario. The content includes an overview of emergency management in Ontario including the systems and processes in place for preventing, mitigating, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters.⁶ The course covers the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and clarifies roles and responsibilities of various levels of government and key partners involved in the field.

How this could be used: to train Ontario public health professionals with dedicated roles in emergency management. It provides a strong foundation in the broader field of emergency management and is relevant for public health professionals who will collaborate with other sectors during an emergency.

Length: 2 days (also includes a 25-minute refresher course)

Note: this course is not tailored for public health professionals. Additional learning resources may be needed to reflect on public health specific activities and roles that align with course concepts.

How to access: course information including available dates available on the [Ontario Emergency Management Training Portal](#) (account registration, enrollment with class fee required)

Risk Assessment and Emergency Planning

This section includes:

- Courses or modules that cover concepts and methods valuable for various types of risk assessments that inform emergency plans or protocols
- Courses or modules that support learning in emergency planning (e.g., continuity of operations, general emergency response plans, hazard-specific plans)

Courses or modules are ordered to first highlight offerings that provide a broad orientation to strategic risk assessment and planning, followed by more focused courses.

Additional courses are listed in the [Appendix](#) that may be valuable for understanding partner roles and responsibilities during an emergency or for hazard-specific concepts (e.g., chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear events). The WHO's Ready4Response [Tier 2](#) and [Tier 3](#) modules (described below under the section on IMS) also include relevant introductory content on risk assessment and emergency planning.⁷

There is a gap in readily accessible training focused on emergency planning including business continuity within the public health context. Some organizations have reported turning to emergency management business continuity certification programs, such as those offered by the Disaster Recovery Institute to meet this need.

1. Health Emergency Readiness for Response Operations

WHO

Description: An online module with four videos on health emergency readiness for response operations (HERO) based on a toolkit developed by the WHO.⁸ The course introduces a risk-based approach to planning, focusing on imminent threats and those likely to unfold in the next six months. The content covers the importance of readiness, scope and key principles of readiness for response operations, developing an action plan, the HERO self-assessment tool, and the importance of engaging partners early for rapid mobilization of resources.

How this could be used: to support professional development of professionals with dedicated roles in emergency management. It also can be used by decision-makers and technical experts involved in the emergency planning process.

Length: videos range from 8–25 minutes

How to access: module freely available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Health Emergency Readiness for Response Operations](#)

2. Epidemic Intelligence

ECDC

Description: A self-paced online course on epidemic intelligence for infectious diseases.⁹ The course includes exercises, knowledge checks and links to additional resources. The content covers an overview of concepts and definitions relevant to epidemic intelligence and describes ECDC's methodology, processes and relevant tools.

How this could be used: to support professional development among public health professionals working in communicable disease control who want to learn more about concepts, tools and practices for the early detection of health threats

Length: 3–5 hours

Note: while this course focuses on epidemic intelligence processes in the European Union (EU) context and the role of the ECDC, much of the content in the modules is broadly relevant, focusing on steps and concepts of this process that could be relevant to different jurisdictions and levels of the public health system

How to access: course available on [ECDC's learning portal](#) (account registration required)

3. Rapid Risk Assessment e-learning Course

ECDC

Description: A self-paced online course on planning and conducting rapid risk assessments for infectious diseases aligned with ECDC's methodology.¹⁰ The course covers foundational definitions and orientation to epidemic intelligence and then going into more detail about the steps in the rapid risk assessment process including data collection, analysis and estimation of risk and level of confidence. The course also shares available approaches and tools.

How this could be used: to support professional development among public health professionals new to the rapid risk assessment process

Length: 3–5 hours

Note: this course focuses on ECDC's approach to rapid risk assessments that takes place within 24–72 hours. It does not cover ECDC's approach to long-term scientific risk assessments; however, some of the concepts, guidance and resources in this course could be applied to other types of risk assessments.

How to access: course available on [ECDC's learning portal](#) (account registration required)

4. Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER)

US CDC

Description: An online module focused on the CASPER process which involves a household survey to provide information about a community to support public health and emergency managers in making informed decisions during the preparedness, response and recovery phases of a disaster or emergency.¹¹ The method can be used to inform communications and local emergency plans, help focus response efforts and assess long-term and ongoing needs.

How this could be used: to support professional development among a broad range of professionals in public health involved in community engagement, planning and emergency preparedness, particularly in application of this method

Length: approximately 30 minutes to complete

How to access: online e-learning available freely on [CDC's training and resource site for CASPER](#)

5. Preparedness and Resilience for Emerging Threats (PRET)

WHO

Description: An online module with five videos on preparing for respiratory pandemics.¹² The module introduces WHO's PRET initiative (preparedness and resilience for emerging threats), covering background information and context, as well as an overview of guidance for a comprehensive planning approach. There is a focus on supporting pandemic planning at the national level; however, the planning considerations it introduces are broadly applicable at regional, provincial and local levels.

How this could be used: for public health professionals and decision-makers that will be involved in pandemic planning at any level of the public health system to prepare for the development of plans or the review of plans being developed at different levels of the system

Length: videos range from 4–8 minutes

How to access: module available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Pandemic Planning: Getting 'PRET' for the Next Pandemic](#)

Emergency Coordination Mechanisms

This section includes learning resources that focus broadly on emergency coordination mechanisms, including the Incident Management System (IMS), or more narrowly on specific components such as the Incident Command System (ICS) and Emergency Operation Centers, along with other interconnected elements for managing emergencies, including policies, plans and procedures.

Courses are presented in order of relevance to Ontario, starting with Ontario-specific IMS courses, followed by international resources from WHO that align with and can be applied to Ontario's IMS framework, and ending with courses on the ICS. While some of the courses introduced in previous sections describe coordination structures, the courses and videos listed here take a closer look at their concepts, principles and components. [Appendix A](#) includes additional information about short videos on the IMS created by PHAC.

1. IMS Course Series

EMO

Description: A progressive series of courses about the IMS that are delivered in person across Ontario, with some courses offered virtually.¹³ IMS 100 is designed to build awareness of Ontario IMS guidance. IMS 101 is a short e-learning course that provides a high-level overview of IMS concepts and can be used as a refresher on IMS 100. IMS 200 is designed to prepare individuals who will be involved in implementing the IMS for simple incidents or during the early phases of a complex incident. IMS 250 is designed to prepare individuals who will implement or perform specific IMS functions within an emergency operations center. A more advanced course (IMS 300) is available for individuals in leadership roles to manage an expanded IMS structure for complex incidents involving multiple organizations. In addition to the IMS Course series, EMO has an Emergency Management series that includes additional specialized courses that may be of interest (e.g., best practices for notetaking for emergency management professionals - EM 240).

How this could be used: to train Ontario public health professionals including leaders with dedicated roles in emergency management. Also, for individuals in emergency planning and decision-making on the use of coordination structures during public health emergencies.

Length: 4 hours to 3 days depending on the course, 25–30 minutes for refresher courses

Note: this course is not tailored for public health. Additional learning resources may be needed to reflect on public health specific activities and roles that align with course concepts. More advanced courses have prerequisites and may require approval. Some courses have associated costs.

How to access: [Ontario Emergency Management Training Portal](#)

2. Ready4Response Tier 2 (Overview of the IMS)

WHO

Description: An online module that includes a series of 14 videos that provide an overview of the IMS and its core functions within the context of public health emergency response.⁷ The terminology aligns closely with Ontario IMS guidance.¹⁴ The module covers an overview of terminology and key functions of an IMS structure. The module also covers the role of risk assessments, emergency response planning and important skills required to work in an IMS effectively.

How this could be used: to provide just-in-time training and an overview of the IMS to public health professionals supporting a public health emergency. When an agency or team identifies opportunities to improve team functioning during an outbreak or emergency, this resource supports learning and development.

Length: videos range from 4–13 minutes

How to access: module freely available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Ready4Response series](#). Module is available in English, French and Ukrainian.

3. Ready4Response Tier 3 (Activating and Managing a Response)

WHO

Description: An online module that includes a series of 22 videos organized in four sub-modules: skills for managing response, developing situational and risk awareness, steps to activating a response, and basic planning processes.¹⁵ The module covers foundational concepts and practices for effectively managing a response, supporting situational awareness, response activation and emergency planning.

How this could be used: to provide a refresher or just-in-time training to leaders that will be involved in implementing an IMS or for public health professionals with dedicated roles in emergency management including professionals involved in emergency planning

Length: videos range from 3–20 minutes

Note: the course acknowledges that procedures for completing response steps will vary between countries and organizations and learners should adapt principles and guidance to meet their needs

How to access: module freely available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Ready4Response series](#)

4. Public Health Emergency Operations Centre

WHO

Description: An online module includes a series of 12 videos that provide an overview of WHO's public health emergency operation centre (PHEOC) framework to manage public health threats and events. The course promotes additional resources to enhance learning and application.¹⁶ The content covers an overview of the IMS, key concepts and principles related to PHEOCs, and planning and operational guidance. The final video introduces activities to support application of the training and materials.

How this could be used: for public health professionals involved in emergency planning that requires a background on emergency operations centers to guide development/updates to emergency plans. Also, for public health leaders representing public health or their agency in a regional/provincial/national level emergency operations centre.

Length: videos range from 4–15 minutes

How to access: module freely available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Public Health Emergency Operations Centre](#). The module is available in multiple languages.

5. ICS “I-Series” Courses

Incident Command System (ICS) Canada

Description: A progressive series of courses focused on ICS – a standard on site command and control system.¹⁷ I-100 is an introduction to ICS with a self-study online version and classroom version. I-200 (delivered in-person with an online self-study component) builds on foundational knowledge and focuses on how single resources or small teams operate within the ICS structure. I-300 and I-400 are instructor facilitated courses and require course participants to apply their skills in exercises. I-300 prepares learners to operate in expanding or evolving incidents and I-400 focuses on application of the ICS for more complex incidents. ICS Canada also offers a 2-hour facilitator-led presentation on the ICS for executive-level understanding (I-402) and train-the-trainer courses to prepare course participants to become ICS instructors.

How this could be used: while ICS is not designed for EOCs, non-site-specific responses, or complex long-term public health emergencies,¹⁸ the ICS course series may still be relevant for municipalities and public health units that have been using ICS, particularly to support shared terminology, role clarity, and coordination during site-based responses.

Length: the online version of I-100 can be completed in 2–4 hours whereas the more advanced courses require 2–2.5 days

Note: this course is not tailored for public health. Additional learning resources may be needed to reflect on public health specific activities and roles that align with course concepts. More advanced courses have prerequisites. Courses have associated costs.

How to access: [ICS Canada website](#)

Simulation Exercises

This section includes:

- Learning resources on planning and conducting simulation exercises
- Courses are listed first if they are suited for a novice stage of learning followed by courses that are more advanced

1. Simulation Exercise Management: Introduction

WHO

Description: A self-paced online module with information broken up into three videos.¹⁹ The content covers how simulation exercises are part of the preparedness cycle and the importance of developing capacity in this area under the International Health Regulations. The module outlines different types of exercises and their purpose and the importance of developing exercise programs. WHO's resources for simulation exercises are also introduced.

How this could be used: to raise awareness about the importance of simulation exercises and serve as an introductory education for public health professionals who will be supporting the development of exercises for their agency

Length: 27 minutes

How to access: module freely available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Simulation Exercise Management](#)

2. Introduction to Exercise Programs (E-Learning) (EM 125)

EMO

Description: An online, self-paced and interactive online course designed to introduce concepts relevant to emergency preparedness exercises with practical guidance on exercise planning and development.²⁰ The content is relevant to both discussion-based and operations-based exercises. Topics featured in the examples focus on non-biological hazards (e.g., fires, cyber incidents, floods, chemical spills); however, the course content, overall, provides broadly relevant guidance for exercise design irrespective of the type of scenario. The course provides an overview of how to approach longer term planning for exercises and outlines steps and good practices for conducting exercises including the process of developing corrective action and improvement plans.

How this could be used: to train public health professionals who will be involved in designing emergency preparedness exercises. Could be used to familiarize public health professionals with scenarios for non-biological hazards that could be incorporated into the design of an exercise.

Length: 2 hours

How to access: course freely available on [Emergency Management Ontario's Emergency Management Training Portal](#) (account registration required)

3. Exercise Program Management (EM 225)

EMO

Description: An in-person and instructor-led course focused on discussion-based exercises (specifically tabletop exercises).²¹ This course builds on the foundational e-learning course (EM 125) described above. The content covers the process of designing, developing, conducting, controlling, evaluating and implementation post exercise requirements. In this course, learners design and participate in a simulated exercise.

How this could be used: to train public health professionals that will be leading the development of multiple exercises for their agency

Length: 2 days

How to access: course information including dates and locations available on [Emergency Management Ontario's Emergency Management Training Portal](#). Requires completion of prerequisite courses.

Emergency Risk Communication and Engagement

This section includes learning resources that focus on principles and strategies for effective risk communication and community engagement in emergency contexts.

Courses and modules are ordered from broad, multi-format introductory training to more focused and comprehensive coverage on risk communication and community engagement principles and approaches. Please see the [Appendix](#) for additional courses that may be of interest on this topic.

1. Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Program

US CDC

Description: The CDC has developed different formats to provide training and education on crisis and emergency risk communication principles and recommended practices.²² Formats include online self-paced options (e.g., webinar series), instructor-led virtual sessions and in-person workshops/one-day sessions. They have also developed supporting resources to complement the training (e.g., manuals and reference cards). Their training program covers content on communication principles, how people process information during emergencies, messages and audiences, community engagement, developing crisis communication plans, communication channels and working with the media.

How this could be used: for communication specialists new to public health or who are new to working in emergency contexts. The webinars can also be used as refresher training for public health professionals who need to communicate on behalf of their organization responding to a public health emergency. The training program's "wallet cards" can be used as a reminder about key principles and tips. The additional formats may be of interest to groups wishing to attend training together in an interactive format.

Length: webinars are approximately 1 hour and training ranges from 4–8 hours based on audience/format

How to access: webinars, training materials and contact information for training requests available on the [CERC Program site](#)

2. Infodemic Management

WHO

Description: A series of self-paced modules with short videos covering strategies, good practices and methods and tools for infodemic management in the context of an acute public health event.²³ The content covers foundations of infodemic management, addressing health misinformation and disinformation, developing an infodemic insights report, social marketing and messaging testing methods, defining a taxonomy for social listening, human-centred design good practices, working effectively as an infodemic manager, and the WHO's information environment assessment framework.

How this could be used: for professional development among public health professionals including communication specialists involved in managing health information during emergencies. While other courses listed in this section cover this topic, the WHO modules on infodemic management could be used to enhance learning in this area.

Length: modules range from 45 minutes to 4 hours with information broken up into multiple short videos

How to access: series of modules freely available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Infodemic Management](#). Module is available in English, French and Spanish.

3. Risk Communication and Community Engagement

WHO

Description: A collection of modules with information delivered in short videos that cover principles and recommended practices for community engagement and risk communication for acute public health events with tailored content for different types of events (infectious disease outbreaks, influenza events, COVID-19).²⁴ The module focuses on SocialNet, a program developed by the WHO aimed at enhancing community engagement and risk communication during health emergencies. Content covers definitions and key principles, common challenges, strategies and approaches including social and behavioural science approaches, (addressing barriers/facilitators to change), strategies to include and engage vulnerable groups, and infodemic management.

How this could be used: for professional development among public health professionals working in communicable disease control and who could benefit from training in effective community engagement and risk communication strategies during public health events.

Length: modules range from 1.5–2.5 hours with information broken up into multiple short videos

How to access: modules freely available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Risk Communication and Engagement](#). Module is available in multiple languages.

4. Risk Communications and Community Engagement in Health Emergencies

PAHO Virtual Campus for Public Health

Description: This self-paced online course focuses on competencies in risk communication and community engagement strategies for health emergencies.²⁵ The course includes quizzes and a final evaluation that is all delivered in a virtual education platform. The course draws on learnings from international outbreaks and emergencies (e.g., Ebola outbreaks in Africa, COVID-19 pandemic) to provide context for health emergencies and challenges for risk communication. It also introduces the International Health Regulations and risk communication and community engagement as a core capacity. The course then dives into concepts and practical strategies and approaches in the areas of coordination with partners and allies, adapting communication through social listening, infodemic management, public communication during emergencies, community engagement and strategic planning for risk communication.

How this could be used: to support professional development among public health professionals and leaders new to public health risk communication and engagement during health emergencies. It would be valuable for staff and leaders with a role in public-facing emergency communication.

Length: approximately 7 hours

How to access: course is freely available from the [PAHO Virtual Campus For Public Health](#) (registration required)

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

This section includes learning resources on mental health and psychosocial support for responders and communities impacted by an emergency.

1. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies

WHO

Description: An online module that includes 11 videos covering mental health and psychosocial support in public health emergency response and humanitarian emergencies.²⁶ The course focuses on supports for communities and for the workforce responding to emergencies. This module covers foundational content on the importance of planning for mental health and psychosocial supports during an emergency context. The content focuses on areas to strengthen capacity in this area including skills needed to work in emergency response, coordination, planning principles, and important steps during the recovery phase. WHO's monitoring and evaluation framework for mental health and psychosocial support is also introduced.

How this could be used: to provide foundational education to staff and leaders supporting preparedness planning, response coordination and recovery strategies to increase awareness of opportunities to address mental health and psychosocial support

Length: videos range 6–33 minutes

Note: the content is delivered from a global health perspective; however, the concepts, guidance and strategies could be broadly relevant

How to access: modules are freely available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies](#). Modules are available in English, Spanish, Polish and Ukrainian.

Emergency Response Reviews

This section includes learning resources covering methods for designing emergency response reviews (e.g., after-action reviews (AARs), early action reviews, in-action reviews (IAR)) that enable learning and continuous improvement.

Courses in this section are ordered beginning with a comprehensive module that introduces multiple formats for conducting reviews, followed by more focused courses addressing specific review formats and contexts for application.

1. Introduction to Designing In- and After-Action Reviews E-Learning Course

ECDC

Description: A self-paced online course focused on IARs and AARs organized in eight modules with interactive learning components (knowledge checks, interviews with experts, available tools).²⁷ This course covers terminology, different theoretical approaches and formats that can be used, and an overview of the process of focusing and planning the review and disseminating the results. More detailed guidance is provided on the mixed-methods format for conducting IARs/AARs (as opposed to the workshop format or key-informant interview format).

How this could be used: this course orients public health agency staff and leadership to the purpose and scope of emergency response reviews. It could be shared with quality improvement and evaluation specialists who are less familiar with the context and purpose of these types of reviews. This course can also be used by a team who will be leading or supporting an emergency response review for the first time or who may be looking for refresher training.

Length: 1.5–2 hours

How to access: course available from the [ECDC learning portal](#) for infectious diseases in (registration required)

2. Management and Facilitation of an AAR

WHO

Description: A self-paced module with information broken up into five videos focused specifically on AARs. This module is part of a collection of resources that the WHO has designed to support countries in monitoring and evaluating progress towards meeting the core capacities of the International Health Regulations.²⁸ The course covers the context and purpose of AARs, steps involved in conducting an AAR aligned with the working group format, general tips for AAR facilitators and available resources.

How this could be used: for public health professionals leading AARs in the working group format for an AAR (an approach that requires 2–3 days with 20–50 interest holders to assess multiple functions of a response). Also, for individuals facilitating an AAR.

Length: 40 minutes

How to access: module available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [After Action Review](#)

3. Management and Facilitation of a Country COVID-19 Intra-Action Review

WHO

Description: A self-paced module on IARs with information broken up into five videos.²⁹ The modules were developed during the COVID-19 pandemic along with a set of tools to support countries periodically assess their ongoing COVID-19 response. The module covers context and purpose for IARs, steps involved, roles and responsibilities for the working group format, available resources for planning, tips for virtual sessions, conducting and follow-up on an IAR and facilitation tips.

How this could be used: while this module was developed to support the COVID-19 pandemic response, the resources could be used for planning IARs during protracted public health emergencies

Length: 1.5 hours

How to access: module freely available on OpenWHO.org at the channel: [Intra-Action Review](#)

References

1. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Strengthening workforce capacity in emergency management: a situational assessment. Toronto, ON: King's Printer for Ontario; 2026. Available from: https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/W/26/workforce-capacity-emergency-management.pdf?&sc_lang=en
2. Public Health Agency of Canada. A vision to transform Canada's public health system: Chief Public Health Officer's report on the state of public health in Canada 2021. Ottawa, ON: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Health; 2021. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/corporate/publications/chief-public-health-officer-reports-state-public-health-canada/state-public-health-canada-2021.html>
3. Public Health Agency of Canada. PHAC training portal (emergency management and public health) [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Public Health Agency of Canada; 2024 [cited 2025 Dec 19]. Available from: <https://training-formation.phac-aspc.gc.ca/course/index.php?categoryid=85>
4. European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). Introduction to infectious disease preparedness micro learning [Internet]. Stockholm: ECDC; 2025 [cited 2025 Dec 19]. Available from: <https://learning.ecdc.europa.eu/enrol/index.php?id=729>
5. World Health Organization (WHO). Ready4Response (tier 1) [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2025 Dec 19]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/Ready4Response/>
6. Emergency Management Ontario (EMO). Course catalogue (basic emergency management) [Internet]. Toronto, ON: EMO; 2022 [cited 2026 Jan 7]. Available from: <https://training.emergencymanagementontario.ca/GTFlex/GTOnline.dll/PublicCourse/COURSENO=our2009042211101101710268>
7. World Health Organization (WHO). Ready4Response (tier 2) [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2025 Dec 19]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/Ready4Response/>
8. World Health Organization (WHO). Health emergency readiness for response operations [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2026 Jan 15]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/Health+emergency+readiness+for+response+operations/504475>
9. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). Epidemic intelligence [Internet]. Geneva: ECDC; 2021 [cited 2026 Jan 9]. Available from: <https://learning.ecdc.europa.eu/course/view.php?id=519>
10. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). Rapid risk assessment e-learning course [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2019 [cited 2026 Jan 9]. Available from: <https://learning.ecdc.europa.eu/course/view.php?id=199>

11. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Community assessment for public health emergency response (CASPER): training and resources [Internet]. Atlanta, GA: CDC; 2024 [cited 2026 Jan 15]. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/casper/php/training/index.html>
12. World Health Organization (WHO). Pandemic planning: getting PRET for the next pandemic [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2026 Jan 15]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/emergencymgmt/536083/Pandemic+planning%3A+Getting+%27PRET%27+for+the+next+pandemic>
13. Emergency Management Ontario (EMO). Course catalogue (incident management system) [Internet]. Toronto, ON: EMO; 2024 [cited 2025 Sep 12]. Available from: <https://training.emergencymanagementontario.ca/GTFlex/GTOnline.dll/CourseCatalogue/group=CGRO2015121617525400872111>
14. Government of Ontario. Incident management system (IMS) guidance: Version 2.0. Toronto, ON: King's Printer for Ontario; 2021. Available from: <https://www.ontario.ca/document/incident-management-system-ims-guidance-version-2>
15. World Health Organization (WHO). Ready4Response (tier 3) [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2025 Dec 19]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/Ready4Response/>
16. World Health Organization (WHO). Public health emergency operations centre [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2026 June 26]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/Public%2BHealth%2BEmergency%2BOperations%2BCentre/577192>
17. Incident Command System Canada. ICS courses [Internet]. ICS Canada: [cited 2026 Mar 27]. Available from: <https://icscanada.ca/training/course-descriptions/>
18. Government of Ontario. Incident management system (IMS) guidance version 2.0 [Internet]. Toronto, ON: King's Printer for Ontario; 2021 [cited 2026 Feb 25]. Available from: <https://www.ontario.ca/document/incident-management-system-ims-guidance-version-2>
19. World Health Organization (WHO). Simulation exercise management [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2025 Sep 12]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/Simulation%2Bexercise%2Bmanagement/500867>
20. Emergency Management Ontario (EMO). Course catalogue (introduction to exercise programs) [Internet]. Toronto, ON: EMO; 2024 [cited 2026 Jan 7]. Available from: <https://training.emergencymanagementontario.ca/GTFlex/GTOnline.dll/PublicCourse/COURSENO=COUR2025081317240302370025>
21. Emergency Management Ontario. Course catalogue (exercise program management) [Internet]. Toronto, ON: EMO; 2024 [cited 2026 Jan 7]. Available from: <https://training.emergencymanagementontario.ca/GTFlex/GTOnline.dll/PublicCourseClasses/COURSENO=COUR2009042216044204550497>

22. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Crisis & emergency risk communication [Internet]. Atlanta, GA: CDC; 2025 [cited 2025 Sep 12]. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/cerc/php/about/index.html>
23. World Health Organization (WHO). Infodemic management [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2025 Sep 12]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/Infodemic%2Bmanagement/499738>
24. World Health Organization (WHO). Risk communication and community engagement [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2025 Sep 12]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/Risk+communication+and+community+engagement/>
25. Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Risk communications and community engagement in health emergencies [Internet]. Washington, DC: PAHO; 2025 [cited 2025 Sep 12]. Available from: <https://campus.paho.org/en/course/risk-communications-and-community-engagement>
26. World Health Organization (WHO). Mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2026 Jan 15]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/Mental%2Bhealth%2Band%2Bpsychosocial%2Bsupport%2Bin%2Bemergencies/536361>
27. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). E-learning course on introduction to designing in- and after-action reviews [Internet]. Stockholm: ECDC; 2025 [cited 2025 Sep 12]. Available from: <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/e-learning-course-introduction-designing-and-after-action-reviews>
28. World Health Organization (WHO). Management and facilitation of an after action review [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2026 Jan 7]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/After%2BAction%2BReview/496674>
29. World Health Organization (WHO). Management and facilitation of a country COVID-19 intra-action review [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2026 Jan 7]. Available from: <https://openwho.org/channel/Intra-Action%2BReview/552620>
30. South Central Public Health Training Center. Continuity of operations planning [Internet]. New Orleans, LA: Tulane University; 2021 [cited 2026 Jan 15]. Available from: <https://pace.tulane.edu/leadership-development/content/risk-communication-best-practices-communicating-effectively-high-stress-situations#group-tabs-node-course-default1>
31. Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). PHAC training portal (emergency health services) [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2013 [cited 2026 Jan 15]. Available from: <https://training-formation.phac-aspc.gc.ca/login/index.php>
32. Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). PHAC training portal (emergency social services basic) [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2021 [cited 2026 Jan 15]. Available from: <https://training-formation.phac-aspc.gc.ca/login/index.php>

33. Health Canada. PHAC training portal (METER basic concepts of radiation and protection principles) [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2021 [cited 2026 Jan 15]. Available from: <https://training-formation.phac-aspc.gc.ca/login/index.php>
34. Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). PHAC training portal (surge, sort, support: disaster behavioral health) [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2021 [cited 2026 Jan 15]. Available from: <https://training-formation.phac-aspc.gc.ca/login/index.php>
35. Health Canada. PHAC training portal (federal nuclear emergency plan) [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2020 [cited 2026 Jan 15]. Available from: <https://training-formation.phac-aspc.gc.ca/login/index.php>

Appendix: Additional Learning Resources

1. Videos on the Incident Management System

PHAC

Description: Internal courses for PHAC staff were developed to prepare them to work within an IMS. They have made a series of video excerpts (2–3 minutes in length) from these courses available on YouTube for external audiences. These videos may be of interest to those looking for public health specific examples of roles and activities across different functions of the IMS. Throughout these videos, there is an emphasis on federal-level public health structures and roles and agency-specific processes.

How to access: videos freely available on YouTube at the links above

- Video: [But why use an IMS in public health incident response?](#)
- Video: [What happens during a public health emergency?](#)
- Video: [IMS planning group](#)
- Video: [IMS coordination and logistics groups](#)
- Video: [IMS operations groups](#)
- Video: [IMS corporate services group](#)
- Video: [IMS event manager](#)

2. Continuity of Operations Planning

South Central Public Health Training Center

Description: This online module includes a series of four videos.³⁰ While some of the sources may be outdated, the course continues to be promoted and may be of interest to learners looking for concepts specific to continuity of operations planning.

How to access: see the course catalog on the [Region 6 South Central Public Health Training Center](#) website (registration required)

3. Emergency Health Services Online Training Course

PHAC

Description: This online self-directed course was developed for primary and secondary responders to introduce concepts relevant to emergency management and the role of emergency health services in response and recovery.³¹ The course provides foundational concepts in emergency management and can be used to understand the role of partners in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies.

How to access: [PHAC Training Portal](#) (free to access, account registration required)

4. Emergency Social Services Basic

PHAC

Description: This online self-directed course was developed for secondary responders who work in emergency social services.³² The course provides foundational concepts in emergency management and can be used to understand the role of partners in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies.

How to access: [PHAC Training Portal](#) (free to access, account registration required)

5. METER Basic Concepts of Radiation and Protection Principles

Health Canada

Description: This online self-directed course was developed for first receivers (e.g., emergency room physicians and nurses, triage nurses, radiation safety officers, nuclear medical personnel), emergency management personnel, and first responders who may be involved in a response to a radiological or nuclear emergency.³³ The course focuses on basic concepts of radiation.

How to access: [PHAC Training Portal](#) (free to access, account registration required)

6. Surge, Sort, Support: Disaster Behavioral Health

PHAC

Description: This online self-directed course was developed for primary and secondary responders. The course introduces disaster behavioural health focusing on vulnerable populations.³⁴ It covers psychosocial consequences of disasters, surge capacity and surge components, triage, psychological first aid, the safety, function action framework, considerations for vulnerable population and special situations, stressors before, during and after disasters and strategies for strengthening and enhancing resiliency.

How to access: [PHAC Training Portal](#) (free to access, account registration required)

7. Federal Nuclear Emergency Plan

Health Canada

Description: This online self-directed course was designed for a broad audience. It covers roles and responsibilities of federal, provincial and municipal governments in Canada, as well as nuclear power plant operators during a radiological or nuclear emergency.³⁵ The course covers the Federal Nuclear Emergency Plan, nuclear emergency functions, provincial annexes, preparedness activities and response capabilities.

How to access: [PHAC Training Portal](#) (free to access, account registration required)

Public Health Ontario

661 University Avenue, Suite 1701

Toronto, Ontario

M5G 1M1

1.877.543.8931

communications@oahpp.ca

publichealthontario.ca

