



## **Public Health and Healthcare: A shared goal of HCID Preparedness**

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**Presentation Abstract:** Infectious disease preparedness relies on local public health entities and frontline healthcare facilities. Inconsistent communication and understanding of processes between the two results in delayed responses to new and emerging threats, putting frontline workers at risk. Recent events including mpox and COVID-19 showed that strong relationships are required between these groups regarding infectious disease threats. Through shared activities including tabletop and functional exercises, preparedness for future events is strengthened and response efforts accelerated. The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) serves as the Regional Emerging Special Pathogens Treatment Center for Health and Human Services Region VI. UTMB's Special Pathogens Excellence in Clinical Treatment, Readiness, and Education Program (SPECTRE) is responsible for leading high consequence infectious diseases (HCID) preparedness and response efforts across Texas and the region. To fulfill this, strong relationships with local and regional public health authorities have been created and maintained. Over the course of several months, discussions and joint exercises have been conducted with public health entities, emergency medical service agencies, and national

partners to understand gaps in procedures and needed resources. The collaborative effort across the region allows for an opportunity to identify needs and share resources to support partnerships and bolster preparedness efforts.

**Speaker Bio:** Ms. Kara Marshall is the program manager for the University of Texas Medical Branch's (UTMB) Special Pathogens Excellence in Clinical Treatment, Readiness, & Education Program (SPECTRE). Ms. Marshall received her MPH from Boise State University and is currently completing an emergency management certificate program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Public Health. She is highly involved in special pathogen preparedness efforts across HHS Region VI, and is focused on strengthening preparedness and response efforts to high consequence infectious diseases.