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### COMPETITIVE DIVISION – PRACTITIONER

#### Equity in Action: At the Intersection of Public Health and Emergency Management in St. Louis, Missouri

If the axiom that necessity is the mother of invention holds true, one of the inventions that must come from the necessities uncovered by the COVID Pandemic, and our collective response is improved connectivity and coordination between municipal emergency management and public health. The Pandemic brought into stark clarity to the complexities of a contemporary disaster, especially as they relate novel threats and rapidly, evolving understanding of conditions.

Adding complexity, the largely untested relationship between Local Public Health Agencies (LPHAs) and Emergency Management Departments was certainly front and center. The real-time negotiation of these complexities revealed the necessity of improved connectivity between LPHAs and Emergency Management Departments. Moreover, like many communities across the nation, the impact of decades of inequity, disinvestment and apathy was spotlighted by COVID.

**Presentation Theme:** This presentation will highlight work across the COVID-19 spectrum, emergency management support, programmatic support, logistics support, vaccine site management and, key to our

discussion today, education and outreach support specifically focused on equitable vaccine availability and administration across the County's many communities, particularly those located in the systemically underserved areas of the North and South county regions.

**Collaborators, Advisor(s) and Department(s) that assisted with this research:** Spring Schmidt, Former Deputy Director of the St. Louis County Department of Public Health