

DEVELOPING AND EVALUATING DISEASE SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

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There is both an art and science to developing disease surveillance systems. No one system can do everything for everyone and still be viable. There are trade-offs and sacrifices that must be made for a system to function. The architects of any system must decide what the goal of the system is and balance these trade-offs. In 1985, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), a guideline for evaluating disease surveillance systems. Because of the proliferation of computer-based systems being developed and used for disease surveillance, the guidelines have been updated recently. The basic tenants of developing disease surveillance systems and how to evaluate them will be discussed in accordance with the CDC's guidelines and will serve as an introduction to the variety of systems that will be presented at the APMMC.

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