

National Biosafety Strategy



MCE Consulting provides expert assistance to national public health authorities globally on the development of a national biosafety framework and implementation strategy. Recognizing that national biosafety strategies will differ because of varying levels of infrastructure, human resources capacity, and financial resources, MCE's approach is tailored to the realities and constraints faced in each country. The structured framework targets the priority core biosafety elements of a national laboratory strengthening program driven by key international instruments including compliance with the International Health Regulations. A multifaceted, integrated "whole of government" approach is used, to include human health, animal health, and security considerations.

A successful national biosafety strategy coordinates activities at both the Federal and local levels. Institutions that work with human and animal pathogens have a fundamental responsibility to ensure these agents are handled in a safe and secure manner. Government bodies have a responsibility to provide guidance and direction to institutions in the development and implementation of biosafety programs. Their oversight role is to provide the necessary assurance that appropriate biosafety management systems and practices are in place at the institutional level. As such, an effective national biosafety strategy is achieved through effectual programs within individual institutions in conjunction with oversight by government bodies.

Based on lessons learned from the field, MCE Consulting services emphasizes the following key points:

- Anchoring fundamental core elements to the International Health Regulations;
- Integration into national laboratory plans for comprehensive laboratory systems;
- Emphasizing leadership, governance and the designation of a national focal point;
- Outlining the roles and responsibilities of different sectors within the country;
- Developing high-impact advocacy materials and effective engagement strategies;
- Building internal capacity with appropriate, cost-effective and sustainable infrastructure;
- Building a foundation of human resources, knowledge and skills to support the strategy;
- Defining oversight and monitoring/performance measurement mechanisms;
- Articulating the need for, and defining strategies for securing sufficient resources and funding mechanisms; and,
- Identifying organizations that can assist with implementation and filling in identified gaps.