How Does CFA Support Outbreak Response Efforts?

CFA uses a blend of qualitative methodology and advanced analytic approaches to answer questions from decision-makers during outbreaks.

Q: How worried should we be?

At the beginning of an outbreak, we can use qualitative approaches to help decision-makers prepare and respond. **Qualitative risk assessments** outline the risk posed to different populations, and **outbreak scenario assessments** provide a range of possibilities for the course of the outbreak.

Q: What is happening now?

At the beginning of an outbreak, there may not yet be surveillance or reporting in place. Even after these have been established, incomplete data from reporting delays can make it look like outbreaks are slowing even while they are still getting worse. CFA addresses these types of problems with a variety of modeling approaches, including **nowcasting** and **transmission modeling**.

Q: What is coming next?

Decision-makers often want to know what to expect in the future: if an outbreak will happen, how big it could get, and how long it may last. Depending on the setting of the outbreak and the data available, **transmission modeling** approaches may be used to make projections of where the outbreak is headed.

Q: How should we respond?

Modeling can be used to help guide or support the use of interventions to slow an outbreak by comparing different possible futures, or a scenario that did happen with one that didn't. CFA uses a variety of **transmission modeling** and **interactive tools**, with varying complexity, to help support decision-making within the context of an outbreak.

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