



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

MA RESPONDS NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Winter
2013



MRC Units Respond to Hurricane Sandy

Superstorm Sandy left a path of devastation in her wake. Parts of New Jersey and New York City were particularly hard hit due to the combination of high wind and rain that brought destructive storm surges and flooding to many coastal areas. Sixteen Massachusetts Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units were activated and many others were put on standby. Nurses, physicians, physician assistants, emergency medical technicians, nonclinical, and animal support volunteers all provided their time and expertise. MRCs furnished warming and charging centers, EOC assistance, functional needs support, and donations collection and delivery. The response afforded MRC units the opportunity to collaborate with the Red Cross, Americorps, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and the State of Massachusetts Animal Response Team (SMART). Efficiency and effectiveness in the face of disaster is critical to any response effort. Hurricane Sandy is a reminder to all volunteers to make sure their volunteer profile is updated and complete!

Save the Date: June 11, 2013 Annual Preparedness Educational Program Assessing Medication, Mental Health and Cultural Needs During Sheltering

Individuals who present to an emergency shelter come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and many require medication for their health problems.

Comprehensive shelter planning must include procedures for obtaining, storing, dispensing, documenting, and disposing of medication as well as culturally competent methods for assessing health care and mental health needs.

In addition to faculty presentations, this year's program will allow attendees to work through case studies to become more familiar with the potential medication issues and health related challenges that typically arise in a general population shelter. The program will be held at Massachusetts Medical Society headquarters in Waltham from 6:00PM to 9:00PM and is free for MA Responds and MRC volunteers! A distance learning option will be available for those unable to attend in person. Registration information and the agenda will be available soon. For more information, please contact [Vanessa Kenealy](#).

MA Responds Hand Sanitizers

Just in time for the flu season, hand sanitizers with the MA Responds, MRC and BHDR logos have been ordered and will be available by late January. A marketing material request form will be distributed soon to unit administrators. For more information, please contact [Johnna Coggin](#).

MA Responds Administrator Training

The second in a series of webinars for MA Responds administrators will be scheduled for February. Look for details soon. Please contact [Liza Martin](#) with any questions.

Join MA Responds

If your unit is not yet a member of MA Responds, please contact Regan Checchio at rcheccchio@regianavilla.com for more information.

Please visit the [MRC state website](#) to download a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Once the MOU has been signed and returned to MDPH, your unit can join a group of units integrating into the system. A copy of the MA Responds Policy and Procedures manual is also available on the [MRC state website](#). For more information about MA Responds, please contact [Lindsay Tallon](#).

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Disaster Behavioral Health Training Series

Disaster Behavioral Health Training Series This year, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Emergency Preparedness Bureau, in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health, is supporting the Boston Medical Center - Center for Multi-Cultural Mental Health to provide Psychological Resilience basic, advanced, and train the trainer courses at various locations throughout the Commonwealth. The training curriculum focuses on building psychological resilience for individuals responding to a disaster as well as how to provide Psychological First Aid to anyone impacted by a disaster. These trainings are relevant to a wide variety of professional and volunteer healthcare, mental health, public health, and public safety personnel. Continuing education credits will be available for several professional licenses. Additional information on upcoming trainings in Boston, Charlton/Worcester-Area, New Bedford, and Northampton as well as online registration can be accessed through the training series' website: <http://66.84.18.170/~cmmhcmtip/impartraining.php>.

Public Health Preparedness Summit 2013

March 12-15, 2013

Atlanta Marriott Marquis
Atlanta, GA

The 2013 Summit, *Strengthening Public Health and Healthcare Preparedness through Innovation, Integration, and Implementation*, will offer a strategic overview on the current state of public health preparedness and highlight research, technical, and practice-based perspectives on strengthening community preparedness while also building and sustaining healthcare coalitions. In-depth discussions will encourage collaboration among all levels of government, along with the private and non-profit sectors, to develop cross-cutting solutions to some of the most difficult public health preparedness challenges. Conference sessions will explore areas including mass prophylaxis and catastrophic preparedness, community resilience, biosurveillance, volunteer management, administrative preparedness, public health law, and crisis standards of care. For more information or to register, please visit: <http://www.phprep.org/>.

The 18th Annual Adult Immunization Conference

May 21, 2013

DCU Center
Worcester, MA

Keynote Speaker: Carolyn Bridges, MD, Associate Director of Adult Immunizations, Immunization Services Division, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Information about registration, specifics on the program agenda, and more will be forthcoming. If you are interested in more information about sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities, please contact Allison Hackbarth at 617-385-3645 or ahackbarth@jsi.com.

Emergency Preparedness Begins at Home – New Online Course

Much effort goes into emergency preparedness at the federal, state, and local levels of government. In addition, it is essential for individuals and families to

prepare on a personal level. Individuals and families should assess their needs, their level of preparedness, and take steps to formulate plans and maintain basic supplies that would enable them to safely endure any disruption to their day to day activities. This module provides emergency preparedness recommendations for individuals and families. The recommendations presented here may also provide guidance to local health departments on recommendations that should be promoted among their constituents. To access the course, please visit: <http://www.masslocalinstitute.org/?p=2705>.

MA Responds Orientation Course

On-Line Training Module

This course provides an overview on how to prepare for and respond to a public health emergency or other event. It is intended to complement additional training volunteers will receive through face to face meetings with their local MRC unit or other volunteer group, other courses recommended by volunteer coordinators and "just-in-time" training provided on-site. Modules include: Public Health Preparedness, Incident Command System, Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication, Personal Preparedness, Activation, Safety and Security, Individuals Requiring Additional Assistance and Behavioral Health. The course can be accessed at www.massmed.org/cme/maresponds or by logging onto your MA Responds account. Click on administration/training and then scroll down to "MA Responds orientation course."

PREPAREDNESS NEWS AND RESOURCES

Flu Educational Resources

Communities across Massachusetts are reporting increased amounts of flu-like illness, and hospitals, community health centers and health care providers are seeing higher volumes of flu patients in their facilities. To help reduce the impact of flu on the health care system, the Department of Public Health has developed a brochure, low-literacy brochure, and poster "Flu: What You Can Do – Caring for People at Home" as an informational resource to help residents care for themselves and their families without having to visit their health care provider.

The materials explain basic concepts such as:

- What the difference is between a cold and the flu
- How to keep from getting the flu
- How to care for someone who has the flu
- When a person should call the doctor, or seek immediate assistance through 911

"Flu: What You Can Do" is available at no cost in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Vietnamese, Russian, Khmer, and Chinese. All versions are available for immediate download or in hard copy format in bulk quantities at <http://www.maclearinghouse.com/category/FLU.html>.

Handwashing materials are available in multiple languages at <http://www.maclearinghouse.com/category/HAND.html>.

Trust for America's Health Preparedness Reports Now Available

The Trust for America's Health has released the 10th annual "Ready or Not?: Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism" report. All the "Ready or Not" reports are available in the Resource Guide for Disaster Medicine & Public Health <http://go.usa.gov/gGBw>.

Traumatic Incident Stress for Emergency Responders

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends that all workers involved in response activities help themselves and their coworkers and reduce the risk of experiencing stress associated with a traumatic incident by utilizing simple methods to recognize, monitor, and maintain health on-site and following such experiences. Helpful information for emergency responders is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/traumaticincident/>.

Coping With a Traumatic Event: Information for the Health Professionals

Traumatic events affect survivors, rescue workers, and friends and relatives of victims who have been directly involved. In addition to potentially affecting those who suffer injuries or loss. They may also affect people who have witnessed the event either firsthand or on television. Health care professionals should be alert to the various needs of the traumatized person. To review common responses to traumatic events and suggestions for interacting with traumatized individuals please visit: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/masscasualties/copingpro.asp>.

Public Response to Alerts and Warnings Using Social Media

The National Research Council of the National Academies convened a workshop to systematically look at the use of social media for alerts and warnings; they brought together social science researchers, technologists, emergency management professionals, and other experts on how the public and emergency managers use social media in disasters. This report summarizes presentations made by invited speakers, other remarks by workshop participants, and discussions during parallel breakout sessions.

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=15853.

Disaster Response Template Toolkit

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has released a new Disaster Response Template Toolkit featuring public education materials that disaster behavioral health response programs can use to create resources for reaching people affected by a disaster. The new toolkit is part of the Disaster Behavioral Health Information Series and can be accessed from the SAMHSA website at: http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/dbhis/dbhis_templates_intro.asp.

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