

**Health Center Integration into  
Local and State Disaster Planning**

April 15, 2010  
National Association of Community Health Centers  
Webinar

by Tina Wright




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**What is Emergency Preparedness & Management (EPM)?**

**Prevention, Mitigation, Planning, Response and Recovery for...**

- Terrorism
  - Biological
  - Chemical
  - Radiological
  - Technological
- Explosions
  - Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)
  - Bombs
- Natural Disasters
  - Hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, tornados
- Disease Outbreaks
  - Flu, SARS, Tuberculosis
- Mass Casualty Events
  - Bus crash, train derailment, construction accident




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**Why should health centers be involved in EPM?**

- Required by federal grant guidelines
- Location, location, location
- “Community Responsive Care”
- ***People are going to walk in anyway!***




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### Invite Yourself to the Table

- Locate planning groups
  - by town, city, region, county, state
  - by discipline – health and medical, public health, schools, long-term care, emergency management, law enforcement, emergency medical/ambulance services, etc.
  - for a specific event – e.g. Boston Marathon, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, large conventions, large scale exercises
- Ask to be put on the meeting agenda



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### Invite Yourself to the Table

- Create a common goal
  - “...to provide a coordinated response to the health and medical needs of community XYZ during an emergency...”
- Educate others on what your health center(s) can *and cannot* do
  - “*This*” health center has a pharmacy and can distribute medications
  - “*That*” health center has several clinical staff who speak Vietnamese and can translate
  - “*That other*” health center has onsite digital X-ray and can take “green and yellow” patients/ walking wounded



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### How can CHCs respond?

- Surveillance of unusual outbreaks and diseases
- Education of community and patients
- Internal staff education, clarification and identification of staff roles
- Vaccination and mass prophylaxis



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**How do CHCs respond, cont.**



- Strengthen capacity to address post-event public demands, i.e. mental health issues
- Outpatient surge capacity and triaging systems
- Integrated role in city-wide emergency response efforts

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**EXAMPLE #1**

On January 12, 2010, a massive earthquake struck the nation of Haiti, causing catastrophic damage inside and around the capital city of Port-au-Prince.

Massachusetts is home to the third largest population of Haitians in the United States.

Haiti's devastating earthquake was felt in Massachusetts health centers over 1500 miles away...

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**EXAMPLE #1**

- After the initial news of the earthquake in Haiti, several health centers had immediate staff shortages
- CHCs serving Haitian patients began efforts to assist with mental health and faith-based services
- CHCs with staff of Haitian origin connected with local agencies to offer culturally and linguistically competent support (e.g. answering phones, offering translation services, grief counseling, etc.)
- CHCs began planning for an influx of evacuees seeking medical and social services

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**EXAMPLE #1**

- CHCs began seeing survivors who self-evacuated to Massachusetts in less than 15 days
- CHCs facilitated Haitian support groups
- CHCs reported capacity to conduct medical clinics just for survivors of the earthquake
- CHCs reported increases in new patient registration of Haitian origin
  - Although many were survivors of the earthquake, they did not identify themselves as such when they initially presented for services



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**EXAMPLE #2**

The outbreak of Novel A H1N1 Influenza really showcased the importance of CHCs being integrated in emergency response and mass vaccination plans in Massachusetts.

- Health centers responded to the public health emergency by:
- Coordinating large-scale vaccination clinics;
  - Educating the public on the new virus and vaccine;



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**EXAMPLE #2**

- (cont.)*
- Changing operations to manage surges in patient volume while maintaining standard operations;
  - Translating flu and H1N1 information into multiple languages;
  - Collaborating with local boards of health and school departments to identify high-risk residents; and
  - Redoubling their efforts to further address disparities in vaccination rates among the state's ethnic and racial minority groups.



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## EXAMPLE #2

As of March 2010, Massachusetts health centers have administered more than 320,000<sup>+</sup> seasonal flu and H1N1 vaccines through routine patient visits and nearly 300<sup>+</sup> public flu clinics.

**Mass. No. 1 in US in flu vaccinations** - A report says Massachusetts vaccinated more residents against the swine flu and seasonal flu in the fall and winter than any other state. Massachusetts Department of Public Health says 36% of residents were inoculated against the swine flu, also known as H1N1, compared with 21% nationally. Seasonal flu vaccinations were administered to 57% of the population, compared with 37% nationwide.

[http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2010/03/21/mass\\_no\\_1\\_in\\_us\\_in\\_flu\\_vaccinations/](http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2010/03/21/mass_no_1_in_us_in_flu_vaccinations/)



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## EXAMPLES #3, 4, and 5

*Create your own coalition*

- Be the headquarters for a local Medical Reserve Corps
- Instead of partnering with others established groups, invite them to partner with you and your groups

*Don't take "NO" as an answer*

- Rather than adjusting your objectives to meet those of a grant or contract, see if your state can locate a funding source for your project



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EPM motto:

Preparing for the  
"Big What If"  
of someday  
helps us manage the  
Everyday.



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**The key is working together.**

- Build partnerships
- **Network** with colleagues from other agencies
- Build your skills together as a team
- Learn from others
- Stay connected
- Blog!
- Twitter!
- Facebook!

Visit [www.massleague.org/Programs/EmergencyPreparedness.php](http://www.massleague.org/Programs/EmergencyPreparedness.php) often; check out our archived newsletters at [www.massleague.org/Programs/EmergencyPreparedness/Newsletter.php](http://www.massleague.org/Programs/EmergencyPreparedness/Newsletter.php)




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**Questions???**

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**Thank you!**




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