

Partnership for the Enhancement of Regional Preparedness (PERP) Grant

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Thank You Stakeholders

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 3rd Annual Region 2 Health & Medical Stakeholder Meeting on October 25, 2011. We had an excellent turnout with representation from more than 10 different health and medical disciplines. We were also fortunate to have Dr. Dan Hanfling as our key note speaker. Attendees were briefed on regional multi-disciplinary planning initiatives taking place in MA Department of Public Health Emergency Preparedness Region 2 (central MA). Dr. Hanfling, special advisor on emergency preparedness and response for Inova Health Systems in Virginia and clinical professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine at George Washington University, discussed his personal experiences and lessons learned with planning and responding to disasters. His presentation reiterated the importance of planning, practicing and collaboration. As we continue to plan on a regional level, we will look to you as subject matter experts to ensure that the planning is comprehensive and meets the needs of the region. We welcome input and participation as we continue to move forward with regional planning. If you were unable to attend the meeting and would like to receive the materials discussed or would like to know how you can become more involved, please contact the grant coordinator at turpinc@worcesterma.gov.



RMCC Activated During October Snow Storm

Massachusetts experienced an unprecedented nor'easter October 29, 2011. The combination of record-breaking snow, wind and rain led to wide spread power outages throughout Massachusetts. Western and Central MA, regions 1 and 2 respectively, were hardest hit. The Region 2 Regional Medical Coordination Center (RMCC), designed to support and assist patient placement and tracking, assist with obtaining and transporting staff, supplies and equipment, and interact with local and state emergency operation centers, was activated for the first time in a real event by the MA long term care mutual aid plan (MassMAP). At approximately 3:30 pm on Sunday October 30th a Health and Homeland Alert Network (HHAN) message was sent to notify long term care facilities of the activation. There was a long term care facility in region 2 debating evacuation. Facilities were requested to complete emergency reporting information including facility status and open bed numbers. All group 1 RMCC responders were asked to report to the RMCC. At 4:15 pm 6 responders arrived and began to identify facilities throughout the region with open beds in the event the long term care facility had to evacuate. Within 2 hours of activation approximately 300 open beds were identified along with transportation vehicles that could be used to assist. Fortunately, the RMCC was notified at approximately 6:30 pm that there was no longer a threat of evacuation and the RMCC stood down. Although no patients were transported, the plan was tested with a real world event and was successful. For several days following the storm, long term care facilities were requested to provide daily emergency reporting information which was compiled and sent to all appropriate individuals.

Importance of Home Health

A medical surge can result from a natural disaster, disease outbreak, industrial accident, etc. Hospitals are inundated with casualties, victim families, and worried well so they need to create bed space. One consideration to increase bed availability is to discharge patients into long-term care, long-term acute care, or a home healthcare setting. Similarly, if a hospital needs to evacuate they may discharge some patients to home healthcare agencies, Home Healthcare is an integral component of our health care system. As a

discipline, home health is quite advanced when developing emergency plans for its patient population. Therefore, PERP representatives believe involving Home Health Agencies more with regional emergency preparedness activities will be mutually beneficial. With this in mind, PERP will hold a planning workshop in January 2012. Representatives from home health, hospital, PERP, etc. will have the opportunity to discuss the process of surging into the hospital as well as into home health care. This meeting will be the basis

for developing a template for both disciplines to use when developing or updating their surge plans. A table top exercise will be scheduled for next spring to exercise the plans developed during this process. Moreover, discussing capabilities and inter-disciplinary expectations in advance of an incident will lead to a more efficient and effective response. Please contact the grant coordinator at turpinc@worcesterma.gov to learn more. In addition, please watch for emails regarding the upcoming workgroup.

Health & Homeland Alert Network

The Health & Homeland Alert Network (HHAN) was developed by the MA Department of Public Health in 2001 to ensure health and medical organizations throughout the state are notified in a timely manner of critical information. If you or someone in your organization has not yet registered to receive HHAN alerts,

we recommend you contact the following email address to become a recipient.

Alert.Network@state.ma.us

Once registered, you will receive a user name, password and profile. Your profile will allow you to customize your means of notification (email, cell phone, home phone, text

message) and determine the categories of alerts you would like to receive. The HHAN is also utilized during emergency drills and exercises. At least 2-3 staff from your facility should be registered if possible. For questions and registration please contact:

Alert.Network@state.ma.us

Visit Our Website

<http://cmemsc.org/PERP/>

- **Grant Information**
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About PERP

MA Public Health Emergency Preparedness Region 2

Colleen Turpin—Grant Coordinator
City of Worcester, Division of Public Health
25 Meade Street
Worcester, MA 01610

Phone: 508-799-1764

Fax: 508-799-8489

E-mail: turpinc@worcesterma.gov

Website: <http://cmemsc.org/PERP/>

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Emergency Preparedness Bureau awarded a health and medical partnership grant to the City of Worcester, Division of Public Health in January 2009 on behalf of Worcester and Central Massachusetts (Region 2). This grant, known as the PERP grant, is designed to enhance the health and medical collective capacity to share resources and respond to large emergencies, or disasters, throughout Region 2. PERP is governed by a ten person executive committee representing ten health and medical related disciplines including public health, the metropolitan medical response system (MMRS), local hospitals, an ACS level I trauma center, local physicians, EMS, specialty care rehabilitation hospitals, long term care facilities, health centers, and home health agencies. The executive committee welcomes participation and input from all regional stakeholders. Please contact the grant coordinator for more information.

Regional Resources

Below are resources available to health and medical professionals throughout the region. Courses offered include Basic Disaster Life Support (BDLS), Advanced Disaster Life Support (ADLS), Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Hazmat Awareness, Foundations for Local Public Health Practice, Risk Communication and many more. Most of these courses are free.

The Center of Excellence for
Emergency Preparedness
Education and Training
("CEEPET")

@
University of Massachusetts
Medical School

For information on classes
being offered, please visit their
website:

www.ceepet.org

Be A Volunteer!

Join the **Worcester Re-
gional Medical Reserve**

Corp.

For information on the

WRMRC and how to apply

please visit their website:

www.worcesterregionalmrc.org

**Local Public Health
Institute
of Massachusetts**

For information on upcoming
classes
please visit their website:

www.masslocalinstitute.org