

NYC Medical Reserve Corps: NYC's Health Preparedness Team

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Presentation Overview

- Role of the NYC Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) in NYC health emergency plans
- Status of the MRC
- Integration of Data with NY State Volunteer Management System (VMS)
- Deployment of NYC-based volunteers



Why build an MRC Program?

- Volunteers are part of **pre-identified, pre-credentialed** and (ideally) **pre-trained** health care workforce, which facilitates their ability to respond to emergencies as part of integrated local emergency response plans
- Training builds emergency capacity in the NYC health care work force
- Volunteers play a critical role in ensuring a rapid return to stability for their communities



Role of NYC's MRC

- Federal initiative being implemented at the local level
 - 821 MRC units nationwide; 28 in NY State
- The primary role of the NYC MRC is to support Points-of-Dispensing (PODs) for mass dispensing of vaccine or antibiotics
- Volunteers may also be called upon to assist the City with mass sheltering operations, as during a coastal storm, **or to assist with medical surge capacity**, as during a pandemic influenza outbreak



MRC Eligibility

- Any health professional with a valid state license or certification, or health professional student, is eligible to volunteer
 - Must live and/or work in NYC



Volunteer Registration

- Registration via the Internet
 - MRC website: www.medicalreserve.org
 - NYC MED portal: www.nyc.gov/health/nycmed
- Registration via the DOHMH Provider Access Line for those without internet access
 - 1-866-NYC-DOH1



NYC's POD Plan

- NYC has developed a comprehensive plan for opening, staffing, and operating PODs during emergencies
- City employees, medical volunteers (e.g., MRC), and non-medical volunteers will work together to staff PODs
 - Approximately 40,000 POD staff are needed for a citywide public health emergency where ~200 POD sites would need to be opened
- Hospitals required to have 3-day supply of antibiotics on hand for patients and staff



NYC's Coastal Storm Plan

- Up to 65 Evacuation Centers and 511 Hurricane Shelters could be opened during Category 4 Storm
- OEM lead agency
 - DHS, DOE, and HRA to provide bulk of non-medical staffing
 - DOHMH providing nursing and other staff to assist
 - HHC lead agency for Special Medical Needs Shelters staffing
 - MRC volunteers are back-up to City employees



Status of NYC MRC

Largest in the Nation!

- >8,600 volunteers registered as of 6/8/09
 - 55% physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and nurses
 - 22% other health professionals, including pharmacists, dentists, respiratory therapists, veterinarians, and podiatrists
 - 17% mental health professionals
 - 6% other, including students and non-medical volunteers



Liability Coverage for Volunteers

- Volunteers indemnified against malpractice under section 50-k of General Municipal Law
 - Considered extension of NYC DOHMH workforce when called up
 - No workers' compensation at this time



MRC Activation

- Volunteer lists loaded from database into web-based notification system that can be accessed remotely
 - Asked to work as close as possible to own neighborhood
 - DOHMH will coordinate with hospitals for emergency deployment of hospital-based volunteers
 - **Volunteers expected to check with employers if activated**
 - Currently only about 40% of volunteers primarily affiliated with hospitals



Trainings and Exercises

- Broad range of topics, both online and in-person
 - Hands-on
 - How to Set-up and Run a POD
 - BDLS
 - ADLS
 - Psychological First Aid
 - Lecture-based
 - Response to BT Agents
 - Chemical Agents Primer
 - Intro to Radiological Emergencies
 - Clinical Mgmt of Blast Injuries
 - Smallpox Vaccination and Adverse Events



Trainings and Exercises (2)

- 2005 PODEX drill; 2006 5-borough flu vaccination POD operation
 - Volunteers worked alongside City employees and other volunteer groups, as with real events
- 2009 POD Full-Scale Exercise Planned for August



Data Integration with NYS VMS

- NYC MRC to integrate data with NYS DOH Volunteer Management System to build one statewide network of volunteers
 - Vast resource for volunteers emergency credentialed, typed, and trained to same standard across state in real-time
 - One database=accurate count of volunteers
 - Volunteers may elect to be available for local, state, and/or federal deployments



Data Integration with NYS VMS (2)

- Registration and volunteer data management to be managed through VMS (source database)
- Real-time data updates to NYC DOHMH NYC MED database
 - NYC Health Alert Network (HAN) and automated notification systems will have current volunteer info at all times
 - May also use NYS VMS notification system



NYC Volunteer Deployment

- NYC-based volunteers to select local affiliation in VMS for relationship management, training, and deployment purposes
 - NYC MRC remains an independent program
- NYC volunteers deployed first for NYC emergencies; request State assistance as needed
- Requests for volunteers to be made using NYC MRC Deployment Questionnaire (see handout)
- NYC may use automated scheduler in NYS VMS (in development)



We need your help!

- Hospital support is needed to verify privileging information
- Pre-credentialing and assignment to “hospital-ready” emergency response level not possible without the help of hospitals
 - We want to prepare volunteers so that they can help **you**
- Place NYC MRC link on hospital websites?



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Thank you!

