



Maine Center for Disease
Control and Prevention
*An Office of the
Department of Health and Human Services*



Maine Disaster Behavioral Health

Helping Our Communities in Times of Disaster

Strengthening your emotional well-being ahead of the flood



Lots of snow, can lead to lots of water. Preparing for and anticipating the the possible arrival of a large-scale flood can be distressing. You may worry about extensive water damage to your home, neighborhood and community. You may face uncertainty ahead about your living arrangements, work and other important life factors. The near-constant stream of news about the flood waters' arrival can give rise to feelings of stress, anxiety and fear. Recognizing these common emotional reactions and taking steps to prepare ahead of flooding is helpful in safeguarding your emotional well-being.

Included in this newsletter are simple and effective ways to manage your flood-related fears and anxiety. Many are essential ingredients for a healthy lifestyle and adopting them can help improve your overall emotional and physical well-being

NEWS, UPDATES and RESOURCES



Disaster Planning for Behavioral Health Treatment Programs

(Excerpts from SAMHSA TAP #34, 2013)

Kathleen Wescott, MA

Director, Disaster Behavioral Health

Behavioral Health Treatment programs need to plan for their own response during emergencies. The program's overall disaster plan can become part of its business continuity plan, or to develop a continuity of operations plan (COOP). Continuity of operations planning requires program's leadership and personnel to consider the hazards and threats that adversely affect their ability to provide essential operations,

programs and services. Examples of scenarios for implementing a COOP:

- When a program must cease providing nonessential services due to a sudden reduction in resources, infrastructure or available personnel, i.e. during a Flu Epidemic)
- When the program cannot provide essential services to clients at its original location, e.g. facility is damaged due to fire; or access is blocked due to an extreme weather conditions or safety concerns.

Behavioral Health Treatment Providers can develop COOP's to guide training on the roles and responsibilities needed by using practice drills; and to share these plans with other community partners in emergency response. One comprehensive manual to help begin or enhance your continuity planning efforts is the (2013) SAMHSA Tap 34: *Disaster Planning for Behavioral Health Treatment Programs*. [Click here to download the full manual.](#)

Behavioral Health Treatment Programs will need to act quickly to accommodate a variety of clients and their needs, such as:

- Current clients facing extra stressors due to disasters or public health emergencies who express a need for extra counseling to maintain and continue their recovery
- Guest clients from other treatment programs or under medical care who have been displaced by the event and come for short- or long-term assistance
- Individuals who completed treatment or discontinued services prior to the event, but whose recoveries are now threatened
- Individuals with ongoing, untreated mental or substance abuse disorder (or both) who need treatment to prevent an escalation of serious psychological symptoms
- Family members and care givers who need assistance for their loved ones; or for themselves, to alleviate concerns
- Patients who have been stabilized for long periods on antidepressants, antipsychotics who are not able to obtain prescription refills which results in sudden medication withdrawal or a relapse to psychiatric symptoms
- Patients on opioid medications for pain who cannot obtain services from their healthcare providers and request help from other treatment programs, or surge into Hospital Emergency Departments.

If your organization would like to have a presentation on Disaster Planning for Behavioral Health Treatment Programs, or to organize a staff training/exercise for testing your written plans, please contact [Kathleen Wescott, DBH Director](#), by email or by phone at 287-3796.

Preparedness: Before Spring Floods

What you can do to help yourself and your family members:

- **Have a plan and implement it.** Research available transportation, relatives who might be able to take you in, shelter locations, etc. Knowing in advance that you are prepared for flooding can lessen your anxiety.
- **Get the facts.** Gather information that will help you accurately determine your risk so that you can take reasonable actions..
- **Make connections.** Reach out to connect with family members and friends.
- **Stay healthy.** A healthy lifestyle — including proper diet, exercise and rest — is your best defense to allow you to make better decisions
- **Reach out to your children.** Help children by restricting constant viewing of the news, giving them assurances that plans are in place to keep them safe and maintain their routines as much as possible.
- **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** Take a moment to recall times when you've successfully managed challenging life circumstances.
- **Seek additional help.** People who feel an overwhelming anxiety, fear or other prolonged reaction that adversely affects their interpersonal relationships or job performance should consult with a trained and experienced mental health professional. (Psychology Today: Updated April 2011)

[Strengthening your emotional well being ahead of the flood.](#) American Psychological Association. (n.d.).

[Be Red Cross ready: Flood safety checklist.](#) This tip sheet provides simple and effective ways to manage flood-related fears and anxiety. American Red Cross. (2009).

[Key facts about flood readiness.](#) This fact sheet provides information on what to do before, during, and after a flood. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2009).



Response: Health and Safety After a Flood

[Manage flood-related distress by building resilience.](#) American Psychological Association. (n.d.).

[Floods.](#) This tip sheet provides simple and effective ways to strengthen resilience and thereby manage flood-related stress.

Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2013).

[A flood of emotions.](#) This webpage offers information on how to prepare for a flood and what to do during and after a flood. It also offers information about the National Flood Insurance Program and has an outreach toolkit for community leaders. North Dakota State Government. (n.d.).

[Helping children through the flood.](#) This tip sheet discusses the emotions a survivor may feel after a flood, how they can cope with these emotions, how to help others deal with the same emotions, and how to help family members recover. North Dakota State Government. (n.d.).

Volunteer Program Growth at DHHS/Maine CDC

Newly hired AdCare staff member Jared McCannell is hitting the ground running in support of Maine CDC's initiative to expand capabilities to provide volunteers in support of Maine's ability to provide public health disaster response.

Jared joined the staff as Volunteer Management Coordinator, with a primary focus of supporting the Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention, Office of Public Health Emergency Preparedness. Jared has worked in volunteer management since 2006. With experience at a number of nonprofit and community agencies throughout the U.S., he has designed and built volunteer programs serving people in a variety of ways, from arts and culture to social services. Before moving back to his home state of Maine, Jared was contracted to redesign a medical volunteer program that provides free corrective surgery for children with physical deformities caused by birth defects, accidents, abuse or disease.



Jared McCannell

Volunteer Management Coordinator

With a background in volunteer management, I have learned many lessons over the years, and the guidelines of this program align with what would certainly be considered best practices in volunteer management nationwide. Whether talking about coordinating volunteers for a school or community event or highly skilled healthcare professionals during times of crisis, we need to know *who* is doing *what*, *where* and *when*—

One significant difference with a medical response volunteer during times of disaster or public health emergencies (whether the need is first aid, critical care, behavioral health or other responses) is that we are all responsible for the highest level of care to the public—our neighbors, friends and families—at a time when they need it the most. The online registry *Maine Responds* is an important tool available in times of

disaster response. This simple registry allows us to identify, verify credentials, communicate, drill, exercise and otherwise place our most valuable assets—healthcare professionals like you—and with the support and direction needed to do your best work in otherwise chaotic times.

Whether you are already part of a Medical Reserve Corps or have a regional affiliation with another emergency response group, registry with Maine Responds simply allows us to help our partnering agencies cover the very basic needs of response—placing the *WHO* doing *WHAT*, *WHERE* and *WHEN* we need them the most! Visit the [Maine Responds website](#).

Meet Training and Exercise Coordinator, Mary McElman, RN

Mary McElman has a strong health care background as an RN of 30 years in Level I sites across three states. She developed a passion for preparedness, training and education after the first real world event she worked, Boston's Chinatown fire. Emergency management became a focus for her to prepare for rather than react to crisis, and it is her belief that response begins locally. Mary has always had a firm belief in volunteering, neighbors helping neighbors, has worked with homeless teen runaways in an urban setting and built a base of core volunteers as team leader of Medical Reserve Corps. Combining these experiences has led Mary to the Training and Exercise Coordinator position, which focuses on supporting the Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention, Office of Public Health Emergency Preparedness. Mary can be reached at 207.287.4077 or Mary.McElman@maine.gov



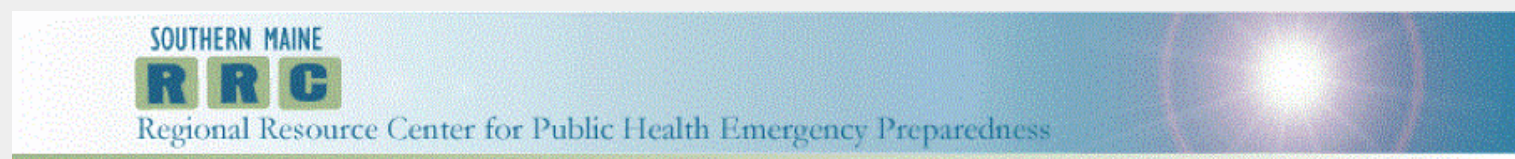
Vulnerable Populations Communication Plan: Overview

The Maine CDC, in collaboration with MEMA, is developing a process and infrastructure for the targeted distribution of all important public health and emergency management messages to the most vulnerable persons within the state of Maine in the event of a disaster.

The overarching goal is to ensure that all vulnerable populations have timely, accurate, clear, concise, consistent information regarding pre-disaster, disaster response and disaster recovery situations in a format they can understand in order to take appropriate actions to ensure the health and safety of themselves and their family members.

To make this happen, Maine CDC is seeking to partner with social service agencies, community partners and trusted leaders throughout Maine who serve the most vulnerable. We are asking that these partners agree to receive the specially prepared messages from Maine CDC via the HAN, and to then forward these messages on to the population they serve by whatever method(s) they choose to optimally communicate with their constituents.

If you need more information and/or are interested in participating in this important initiative, please contact Jane Coolidge the Maine CDC at: jane.coolidge@maine.gov



Southern Maine Regional Resource Center

Paul Weiss MS, BS, CHEC

Director - Southern Maine Regional Resource Center for Health Emergency Preparedness

Our last Regional Coalition meeting was held March 26th in Freeport, ME. This meeting continued a focus on Regional Communications and part 2 of a how Emergency Radios Systems Work, Talk with RCM Communicaitons, along with some other regional coalition communication news, events and seminars.

Here's what we're working on:

- SMRRC has been working with the ME CDC on the Regional and State Ebola Plan. That plan is set to debut this spring. We will then make plans on setting up some regional exercises to test that plan. These will be over the next several months and will involve most regional healthcare agencies.
- SMRRC is working to increase the signatures to our Regional Healthcare

Coalition Memorandum of Understanding on Emergency Preparedness Cooperation. That document is the bases of our Coalition and can be found at http://smrrc.org/SMRRC Healthcare Mutual Aid MOU 9_6_2013.pdf.

- SMRRC has been doing monthly communications drills with each County Emergency Management Agency and worked to improve healthcare response via Radio and Web based alerting tools.
 - SMRRC has worked with County EMA and NOAA in Gray Maine on warnings and effort to prepare healthcare agencies during a very snow filled winter. These efforts paid off well in that Maine Healthcare systems worked efficiently and effectively during the worst of these storms.
 - SMRRC will be working with several regional hospitals on their internal drills trainings and exercises in the next few months. We will also be presenting at the Maine Prepares conference next week.
-



Central Maine Regional Resource Center

Kara Tudman Walker, M.S.

Director, Central Maine Regional Resource Center, a
Maine CDC Partner

The Central Maine Regional Resource Center has been very active in healthcare coalition building for the region. Not only through scheduled meetings, but also as a resource for Ebola preparedness and planning and support for facilities when experiencing bed crunches from influenza patient surges. In December, coalition members tested Ebola response plans at a tabletop exercise. Members recently reviewed the after-action report for the exercise to determine steps to help strengthen our coalition's response. CMRRC will be assisting coalition members with tracking and completing these important after-action items. Maine CDC will be finalizing the Maine Ebola Response Plan in the near future with the assistance of many stakeholders including the regional resource centers. CMRRC will also be assisting Maine CDC in the development of a state-wide crisis standards of care plan.

In support of the coalition's readiness, CMRRC is offering several training opportunities in the central Maine region.

- **Hospital Incident Command System/Incident Command System refresher:** May 7th (Paris Fire Department, South Paris), June 4th (Franklin Memorial Hospital, Farmington).

- **Psychological First Aid**: May 21st (Central Maine Medical Center, Lewiston).

Regional coalition meetings are held at Central Maine Medical Center, Lewiston.

Upcoming dates and focus areas include: April 16th: Continuity of Operations; June 25th: Revision of regional Hazard Vulnerability Analysis; August 27th: Revision of training and exercise plan and charting course for next year.

We always welcome new members! For further information, please contact our office or check out our website! <http://www.cmrrc.org>

Get Social with AdCare!

We launched our digital marketing campaign this fall! You can now connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Foursquare and YouTube. The links are all below - don't forget to like us on Facebook!



Facebook



Twitter



Pinterest



LinkedIn

UPCOMING EVENTS & TRAININGS

You can always find information on our courses & training offerings on our website: <http://www.mainedisasterbehavioralhealth.com/> or www.adcareme.org -- But we will also include some course information below!

Maine Partners in Emergency

Preparedness Conference

April 21-22 * Augusta Civic Center

The 7th Annual Maine Partners in Emergency Preparedness Conference will feature two thought-provoking plenary sessions. On Tuesday, an internationally acclaimed scientist and explorer, leader of more than 55 expeditions to some of the remotest reaches of the planet, will discuss what he and his team have learned about the global climate system and its application to Maine. Also, Bill Jenkins, Director of the Maine CDC Office of Emergency Preparedness, will be leading a panel discussion on Maine's regional response plans to manage Ebola-related healthcare and services.

Bill lead the Public Health response at Maine CDC over a four- month period, and brought together a statewide group of healthcare and public safety professionals to develop planning guidelines, communications and responses. And on Wednesday, a member of New York State Office of Emergency Management, well versed in disaster management, will talk about the massive lake effect snow storm that struck Western New York in November 2014. Jared McCannell, Public Health Volunteer Coordinator, will be presenting on *Maine Responds*, the Maine CDC Healthcare Professionals' Volunteer Registry. This program allows professionals, both clinical and non-clinical, students and retirees involved in the healthcare field, to support a public health or disaster response in Maine. For more information and to register visit [Maine](#)



Building Resilience in Community

May 13 * University of Maine Orono

Join the Maine Military & Community Network as they present the 5th Annual Statewide Conference : Building Resilience in Community. Highlights include: Psychological and Moral Injury in War, Emerging Approaches in Healing and Trauma, and a clinical presentation on Recovery from Trauma.

Disaster Behavioral Health: A Critical Response

May 14-15 * University of Maine at Fort Kent

June 15-16 * Senator Inn, Augusta

A training curriculum for behavioral health, spiritual care, and substance abuse professionals as well as disaster responders and natural community helpers.

Program Purpose of these trainings is two fold:

1. To develop a better informed disaster response community in Maine around the issue of behavioral health and its critical role in disaster response.
2. To develop a volunteer team of disaster behavioral health responders throughout Maine who are available to

Psychological First Aid (PFA)

May 21 * CMMC, Lewiston

A full-scale public health response to disasters must attend to both the physical and mental health needs of affected groups. The latter set of needs is especially important because most authorities agree that far more individuals will report psychologically-related complaints than will report physical symptoms directly stemming from the injury-causing agent or event. Because a large scale emergency will overwhelm existing mental health response resources, psychological first aid - the provision of basic psychological care in the short term aftermath of a traumatic event - is an important skill set that all public health workers, emergency responders and natural community helpers should have.

Program Overview

This program is a six hour, interactive, face-to-face training that provides public health professionals, emergency responders, and natural community helpers without former mental health education with the concepts and skills associated with psychological first aid. Additionally, this training is applicable to public health settings, the workplace, the military, mass disaster venues, and even the demands of critical incidents, e.g., dealing with the psychological aftermath of accidents, robberies, suicide, homicide, or community violence.

provide mental health and substance abuse support in the event of a disaster or local emergency.

Day One: Participants will learn about the behavioral health impact of disasters on individuals and communities. They will also learn about normal and adverse stress reactions and be given information about how the state and national disaster preparedness and response systems work.

SAVE THE DATE

Compassion Fatigue September 29 - Augusta

Studies confirm that caregivers can be host to a high level of compassion fatigue. Disaster responders and workers can struggle to function in care giving environments that continuously present emotional challenges. Affecting positive change in society, a mission so vital to those passionate about caring for others, is important to understand and support. This type of care can take a toll on everyone from full time employees to part time volunteers.

Please save the date and join us for a one day training on Compassion Fatigue.



Copyright © 2015 AdCare Educational Institute of Maine, Inc., All rights reserved.

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

