Coordinated Regional Disaster Planning for Long-Term Care and Home Health Agencies

An Example of Strategy Development through a Data Driven Gap Analysis

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Background and Method

- The City of Houston Office of Emergency Management (OEM) conducts health care Hurricane preparedness summits with agencies annually that provide long term care and/or home health support. The latest summit was held on April 7, 2011.
- To identify existing gaps in planning, participants were asked to complete a previously tested organizational preparedness survey.
- A total of 98 agencies completed the survey that covered the following organizational domains:

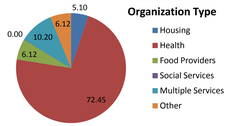
1. Hazard knowledge,
2. Management direction & coordination,
3. Formal & informal response agreements,
4. Supportive resources,
5. Protection,
6. Coping & restoration, and,
7. Initiation of recovery.

A descriptive analysis was conducted. We calculated preparedness scores and standardized ratio scores for each of the organizational preparedness survey domains. Results of the survey informed the development of an all-hazards Long Term Care Home Health Emergency Management Collaborative (LTCHHEMC) and provided initial priority focus areas.

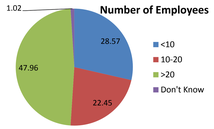
For more information on this project, please visit http://www.houstontx.gov/health/cohcommunity/LTCHHEMC.html or contact John Fleming at LTCHHEMC@houstontx.gov or call 832-393-5055

Results

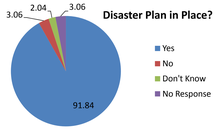
Organizational Characteristics



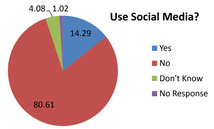
Nearly three-fourth of the organizations identified themselves as a health service agency.



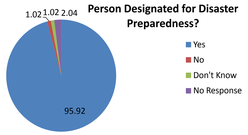
Close to half of the organizations had more than 20 employees.



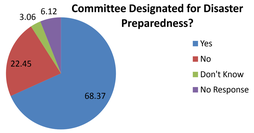
Majority of the organizations reported that they had a written disaster plan.



Nearly four-fifth of the organizations do not use social media to communicate with their clients .



A majority of organizations reported that they had a particular person responsible for disaster planning.



Two-thirds of organizations reported that they had a committee responsible to address disaster planning.

Overall Preparedness Score

Dimensions of Disaster Preparedness	No. Items (Activities) on Checklist	Preparedness Score	Preparedness Standardized Ratio Score
Hazard Knowledge	21 items	12.80	.61
Management Direction & Coordination	6 items	3.27	.54
Formal & Informal Response Agreements	2 items	.63	.32
Supportive Resources	1 items	.31	.31
Protection	5 items	2.92	.58
Coping & Restoration	2 items	1.47	.73
Initiation of Recovery	1 item	.57	.57

Interpretation

Coping and Restoration was the domain where the surveyed organizations indicated they were most prepared. Seventy-three percent of respondents reported that they were prepared in the "Coping and Restoration" domain of the Preparedness Survey.

However, a majority of the agencies reported that they were ill-prepared in domains such as "Formal & Informal Response Agreements" and "Supportive Resources". Only 32 and 31 % of the organizations reported that they were prepared in the "Formal & Informal Response Agreements" and "Supportive Resources" domains, respectively.

Utilization of Survey Results

Intervention Strategy

Following the survey, HDHHS and OEM formed a collaborative with other local public health, emergency management, hospital and health care preparedness organizations, and State health agencies to convene an all-hazards Long Term Care Home Health Emergency Management Collaborative (LTCHHEMC).

This new collaborative seeks to:

1. Build community resiliency.
2. Build preparedness and response capacity, particularly in the Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8 Public Health and Medical Services realm.
3. Collaborate and leverage capabilities, resources, and assets with our planning and response partners to best serve the emergency management interests of the Long Term Care (LTC) and Home Health (HH) community and the ESF8 function as a whole.
4. Develop effective communication channels with LTC and HH representatives.
5. Enhance readiness through better understanding of emergency management systems and processes via LTCHHEMC participation in briefings, assessments, planning, training, and exercises.

Moving Forward

Challenges

- Sustaining interest and the "What's in it for me?" factor
- Competitive, isolated organizations
- Surge capacity

Opportunities

- Establish & exercise MOAs/MOUs / mutual aid plan
- Develop resource guide to support emergency operations
- Leverage participation by involving trade organizations

Best Practices

- On-site shelter and childcare for staff during disaster recovery
- Maintenance Engineer 24/7 contact information
- Inclement weather policy

Questions based on Lessons Learned

- What happens to your life line systems during electrical failures?
- What does it mean to be on a priority restoration of electric service list?
- What are the travel & transportation plans of residents and staff during emergencies?