

How To Prepare Your Hospital/Community

With growing concerns regarding bioterrorist attacks, health care facilities must be prepared to take the necessary steps to respond to a variety of biological, chemical and nuclear agents. They must have plans in place which address the organization, community and the public health response team.

The following steps will provide valuable information for preparing a disaster and emergency readiness plans.

- **Access an up-to-date template for bioterrorism readiness**

Medical Reserve Corps. - White House Volunteer Initiative

During the State of the Union address, President Bush launched *USA Freedom Corps*. The goal of this initiative is to provide opportunities and create incentives for Americans to become involved in serving their communities and country through volunteering. Specific to health care providers, this opportunity could come through the community-based *Medical Reserve Corps* which are now under development. The objective of the *Medical Reserve Corps* is to harness the strength of healthcare professionals to augment local health care capacity during an emergency. This project is being managed under the auspices of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Health and Human Services. The website for additional information regarding *U.S. Freedom Corps* is www.usafreedomcorps.gov. For additional information and to sign up for the Medical Reserve Corps go to www.citizenrcorps.gov/medical.html.

Bioterrorism Readiness Plan: A Template for Healthcare Facilities - From the American Practitioners of Infection Control Bioterrorism Task Force and CDC Hospital Infections Program Bioterrorism Working Group
www.apic.org or www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/Bio/bio.htm

Outlines the steps necessary for responding to the biological agents most likely to be employed in any future biological attack: smallpox, botulism toxin, anthrax and plague.

- **See how the American Hospital Association is preparing its members to be disaster ready**
www.aha.org

Hospitals have the responsibility of ensuring communities that resources and health care personnel are available and properly trained to respond to bioterrorist attacks. The American Hospital Association's website contains information which will help hospitals assess their resources, prepare disaster readiness plans and provide guidelines for releasing patient information.

- **Access information for clinicians and the general public** - From John Hopkins University Center for Civilian Biodefense Strategies
www.hopkins-biodefense.org

This site offers background information on the various diseases which can be brought on by acts of bioterrorism. Information is provided for the clinician as well as for the community.

- **Find out how the American Red Cross is reaching out to communities**
www.redcross.org

The American Red Cross reaches out to communities across the nation during times of disaster. Visit their website to find basic information about anthrax, how to prepare for disasters, how to donate blood or money during disasters and much more.

- **Ask your facilities managers the right questions about your plan for responding to building emergencies**
 - Sample Fire Emergency Plan Checklist - From the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA)
www.boma.org/emergency/sample%20fire%20plan.pdf [PDF file]
 - OSHA Standard for employee emergency plans and fire prevention plans - From the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration
www.osha-slc.gov/OshStd_data/1910_0038.html
 - Emergency Management Guide for Business and Industry - From the Federal Emergency Management Administration
www.fema.gov/library/bizindex.htm

<http://www.nursingworld.org/news/disaster/bioprep.htm>