

# **CARROLL COUNTY CITIZEN CORPS Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)**



## **Standard Operating Procedures**

### **CCMRC**

Carroll County MRC

March 2009

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# **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

## **History**

In early 2002, the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) announced the formation of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) program under the umbrellas of Citizen Corps. The overall goal of the project was (and is) to establish teams of local volunteer medical professionals and laypersons that can contribute their skills and expertise during times of community need, such as influenza pandemic, chemical spill or act of terrorism.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Carroll County Medical Reserve Corps (CCMRC) is to establish and maintain teams of active and retired medical professionals, laypersons and public health professionals to serve the citizens of Carroll County (CC) by augmenting medical support functions during times of local or regional public health exigencies.

## **Goals & Objectives**

- Recruit, enroll and maintain a group of medical and non-medical volunteers sufficient to support staffing of mass vaccination/mass prophylaxis sites in CC.
- Develop and maintain a framework to match volunteers' skills with the community's needs, including medical surge capacity.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to assist with non-emergency public health functions/initiatives, such as health education, vaccination clinics and public awareness campaigns.
- Deliver comprehensive training opportunities to volunteers through simulation exercises, classroom training and access to online education resources.
- Foster a culture of acceptance, recognition of the value of volunteers, and utilization of volunteer staffing throughout the CC.
- Create a framework of support that will sustain the MRC over time.

## **SERVICE PRINCIPLES**

Major community emergencies may arise from natural (tornado, winter storms, flooding), mechanical (sewage back up, power outage), or intentional (biological, chemical or other terrorist) events. In the event an emergency impacts or threatens the health of a large number of New Hampshire citizens, or presents health issues in a specific geographic area within the boundaries of Carroll County, the CCMRC and its programs will be involved supporting local and state health departments as needed.

The overall goal of the CCMRC involvement in an emergency is to minimize or eliminate negative health effects of the emergency. CCMRC volunteers, may participate in the following emergency responses to support:

- Mass vaccination
- Mass prophylaxis
- Mass medical care
- Communicable disease control
- Vector control
- Health needs of special populations
- Targeted public awareness campaigns

By staffing mass vaccination or mass prophylaxis clinics in the region with medical and non-medical volunteers, the CCMRC will augment health services to residents in the event of a large-scale public health emergency with the potential to overwhelm existing service providers. Additionally, the CCMRC will be utilized to enhance high volume services, such as flu clinics and back-to-school immunizations. The CCMRC may also be utilized to enhance public health by participating in community health education functions.

### ***Management Principles***

Any CCMRC responses will be managed under the organizational structure set forth in the Incident Command System (ICS) protocols. ICS provides for structured management and communications, allowing for smooth expansion and contraction of incident response deployment.

The Carroll County MRC will operate in accordance with the following principles:

- We treat all people, volunteers, clients and co-workers with respect and dignity in all situations.
- We honor the fact that volunteers are donating their time and expertise for the overall health and well being of residents.
- We will communicate clearly and consistently with CCMRC volunteers.
- Input from CCMRC members is encouraged and valued.
- No CCMRC member will be asked to perform beyond the scope of his or her licensure/credentialing, training or comfort level.
- The CCMRC will consistently seek inclusion of residents across all demographics.

## **ORGANIZATION**

Carroll County Medical Reserve Corps is comprised of :

- A Director (by consensus of the Advisory Board)
- An Advisory Board
- An Information Systems Coordinator (Database)
- Representatives from:
  - Medical
  - Nursing
  - Fire
  - Safety
- A Training and Volunteer Coordinator

### **Structure**

The CC MRC will be organized identically to the other Citizen Corps programs with ICS/NIMS compliance being the overall force. Volunteers will be organized into local teams designated to serve in a designated geographic area. These teams will be broken into sections corresponding to the organization described in the CC POD Plan and the CC Medical Surge Plan.

### **Elections**

The CCMRC program will be structured with the following elected leaders to best build team spirit for the volunteer basis of teams: CCMRC Director, Secretary, and Team Leaders to oversee the organization and assist in the training and activation of members. Other leaders may be needed as determined by CCMRC membership and/or Director of CCMRC. All elected positions will serve until replaced by a majority vote. Vacant positions may be filled by appointment until the next election is conducted.

#### ***Election of Leaders:***

All leaders shall be voted on by a simple majority of members present.

There will be no term limitations for elected officials. In the event of a tie vote, the current CCMRC Director will cast the tie-breaking ballot.

All outgoing officials are encouraged to train the incoming leaders to provide a smooth transition.

#### ***Qualification and Responsibilities:***

All CCMRC Tier 3 leaders must have completed the IS100, 200, 700 and 800 prior to assuming a leadership role. In the absence of the Director, the chair of the Advisory Board shall assume all the duties and requirements of Director. The CCMRC Secretary shall record and distribute the minutes of all CCMRC meetings, and keep a permanent file of all minutes of each meeting.

### ***Subcommittees:***

Subcommittees may be formed or appointed by the Director, as needed to investigate, research, prepare, or analyze data pertinent to the completion of CCMRC activities.

All members of the CCMRC may serve on subcommittees. Non-members may serve in an advisory role only

**Changes.** Members will vote on any recommended changes to operating guidelines and procedures at their annual meeting.

## **MASS VACCINATION/MASS DISPENSING CLINICS**

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak that threatens the health of a high percentage of residents, the CCMRC may be called upon to establish or support emergency mass vaccination or mass dispensing clinics. Clinic staff and first responders and their immediate family members will be given priority to receive vaccination and/or prophylaxis.

Other CCMRC members may be necessary to support the operation as key components of each clinic may include:

- Traffic control
- Crowd Control
- Security
- Triage
- Contact Evaluation
- Orientation Video Rooms
- Forms distribution
- Forms review
- Medical Screeners
- Physicians evaluators
- Vaccinators/Witnesses
- Vaccine preparation
- Medical Records/Data entry
- IT Support
- Supply management
- Staff support

Clinics will be organized according to established *emergency response plans appropriate for mass vaccination clinics.*

## **VOLUNTEER RELATIONS**

### **Expectations**

CCMRC volunteers agree to be available in the event of a large public health emergency with the potential to overwhelm traditional health systems. Minimum requirements for volunteers are:

- Citizen of United States or legal/registered alien.
- Current mailing address and contact information.
- Current professional licensure information (for medical professionals)

The MRC office will keep volunteers informed of upcoming activities, volunteer opportunities and needs, and pertinent program information.

## **Core Competencies**

All volunteers, at a minimum, will be able to:

- Describe the procedure and steps necessary for a member to protect health, safety and overall well-being of themselves, their families, the team, and the community.
- Document that the CCMRC member has a personal and family preparedness plan in place.
- Describe the chain of command (e.g., Emergency Management System, ICS, NIMS), the integration of the CCMRC, and its application to a given incident.
- Describe the role of the local MRC unit in public health and/or emergency response and its application to a given incident.
- Describe the MRC member's communication role(s) and processes with response partners, media, general public, and others.
- Describe the impact of an event on mental health of the MRC member, responders, and others.
- Demonstrate the MRC member's ability to follow procedures for assignment, activation, reporting, and de-activation.
- Identify limits to their own skills, knowledge, and abilities as they pertain to MRC role(s).

## **Recruitment**

The CCMRC will maintain active and ongoing recruitment efforts. Active volunteers are encouraged to assist with recruitment by encouraging appropriate potential volunteers to consider joining. Opportunities to set up recruitment booths at various venues (town fairs, health fairs, community events etc.) in the community will consistently be sought, as will opportunities for exposure in local media (newspapers, radio, television). Brochures and flyers will be available in locations throughout the region and the program will continually seek new venues for information distribution.

## **Enrollment**

Volunteers may enroll in the CCMRC in a variety of ways; contacting the office by e-mail or phone; completing the volunteer application form and mailing the completed application or by completing the application at a recruitment event.

Volunteer Packets will include:

- Volunteer Form
- Follow up Letter
- Copies of the MRC Newsletters
- Family Disaster Plan

- Business-sized envelope addressed to the CCMRC office

New CCMRC volunteers are expected to complete the Volunteer Application and return it to the CCMRC office. CCMRC volunteer is expected to furnish the office with:

- Current mailing address
- Contact phone number(s)
- E-mail address (if applicable)
- Licensure
- Completed training
- Interests
- Abilities
- Limitations

All information in the application will be entered in the database.

## **Orientation**

Annual Volunteer Orientations will be offered to enrolled volunteers as well as individuals interested in finding out about the CCMRC. Orientations will include information on emergency response plans; an overview of bio-threats; a summary of the Medical Reserve Corps organizational structure, response plan and volunteer opportunities.

## **Licensure and Credentialing**

Current licensure is not a requirement for medical professionals to volunteer with the CCMRC. Inactive *and* active medical professionals are, however, requested to provide license number(s) to the CCMRC office. The information will be entered in the database. Credentials/licenses will be verified and recorded through ESAR-VHP.

In the event of a large public health emergency, CCMRC members will be utilized commensurate with their training and skills. Though there are some tasks that members whose licenses have expired will be prohibited from performing (vaccinating, prescribing medications, etc.), their expertise and training may be utilized in other areas (contact review, exit review, etc.). If an emergency is of a large enough magnitude, the governor may waive licensure requirements and authorize retired and out-of-state medical professionals to perform medical procedures, in which case members whose licenses are inactive may be utilized in the same manner as those with current licensure.

## **Assignment (Tiered Volunteering)**

A goal of the CCMRC program is to create an atmosphere that works well for *all* members *and* ensures we are prepared in the event of a large-scale public health emergency. The tiered system of volunteering facilitates that goal:

- **Tier 1:** The tier 1(Dormant) volunteer chooses to be available only in the event of a large-scale public health emergency. Typically, a tier 1 volunteer does not have much time available to attend pre-event trainings or exercises. In the event

of CCMRC activation, tier 1 volunteers will be provided “just-in-time” on-site training on the first day of activation.

- **Tier 2:** The tier 2 (Active) volunteer is interested in obtaining pre-event training, participating in exercises, and may choose to volunteer in non-emergency public health functions upon request. In essence, the tier 2 volunteer exhibits an active interest in CCMRC functions and a willingness to participate in events.
- **Tier 3:** The tier 3 (Leader) volunteer is interested in accepting a leadership role within the CCMRC. Most tier 3 volunteers will be assigned to positions within the Incident Command System (ICS) structure. Tier 3 volunteers may choose to attend local and out-of-town trainings, seminars and conferences. They agree to participate in planning meetings and exercises, and may choose to participate in non-emergency public health functions upon request.

## **Communications**

Non-emergency communications will be achieved via e-mail, phone and postal system. Phone calls and e-mails from volunteers will be returned promptly.

A quarterly CCMRC Newsletter will be distributed by email to all volunteers. The newsletter will include recognition of recent volunteer efforts, upcoming trainings and events as well as pertinent items of interest.

## **Media/News Releases**

Carroll County MRC media and/or news releases will be submitted and released in accordance with existing protocols.

## **Training**

The CCMRC office will continually seek training opportunities for volunteers. The Carroll County MRC office will:

- Periodically list pertinent web-based trainings in communications and/or the quarterly newsletters.
- Offer American Red Cross or American Heart Association Adult CPR/AED & 1<sup>st</sup> Aid classes. Child and Infant CPR may be offered upon request at the discretion of the Advisory Board.
- Provide quarterly training sessions in each of the major communities in which volunteers are assigned. The quarterly trainings will be designed in such a way as to provide volunteers with a broad overview of various aspects of the CCMRC program, FEMA IS100 and 700 courses, or to address potential issues specific to activation.
- Volunteers (usually Tier 3 or medical volunteers) may be offered opportunities to attend out-of-town trainings, seminars and/or conferences that are specific to their assigned roles.
- Exercises which simulate MRC activation, mass vaccination clinics, etc. will be developed and offered as appropriate. Real life situations that provide hands-on experience may preclude simulations.

## **Exercise Participation**

As is the case with other MRC functions, participation in exercises is not mandatory for volunteers. Volunteers are, however, encouraged to participate in planned exercises and simulations. The MRC will strive to offer exercise opportunities, at minimum, on an annual basis.

## **Volunteer Recognition**

It is the goal of the CCMRC to offer volunteer recognition as deemed appropriate by the Advisory Board.

# **VOLUNTEER UTILIZATION**

## **MRC Activation**

Emergency activation may occur at local emergency management discretion or as a regional decision. In the event of a public health or medical emergency, MRC members will initially be notified through utilization of multiple systems. Depending on the situation, members may be informed of the nature of the emergency and may be instructed to report to designated areas. Emergency notification may include:

- Mass E-mail.
- Phone bank staffed by MRC volunteers.
- Mass Media (at the discretion of the Incident Commander).

Response to volunteer notification will be tracked by the Group Leader and/or his designee.

On the first day of emergency clinic operations, “just in time” training will be provided, on-site personnel assignments will be established, staffing needs determined and shift assignments made.

In mass vaccination/mass prophylaxis scenarios, full emergency clinic operations will commence and continue until it is determined that they have served as many citizens as reasonably possible.

## ***Special Projects***

Non-Emergency Activation: CCMRC volunteers may be enlisted to assist with functions that are outside the scope of normal day-to-day operations, or situations in which utilizing *only* paid staff will inhibit normal operations. Situations in which CCMRC volunteers may be asked to assist include:

- Public awareness campaigns.
- Vaccination clinics (flu, etc.)
- Localized disease outbreaks

- Public health education events.
- Special projects

Volunteers who are acting in a medical capacity that requires licensure or certification must possess current credentialing. The CCMRC Director is responsible for ensuring that credentialing is current for volunteers who serve in a medical capacity.

### ***Confidentiality Agreement***

On the first day of emergency clinic operations, or the first day a volunteer reports for duty, all volunteers will be required to attend “Patient Confidentiality” and “Blood borne Pathogen” training prior to working with the public. Each volunteer must sign a patient confidentiality agreement form. Training records will be maintained by the CCMRC Director.

Volunteers who are participating in special projects may be required to attend “Patient Confidentiality” training and sign a confidentiality agreement. Training records will be maintained by the MRC Director and entered into the database.

### **Liability**

***The MRC volunteer liability philosophy is based on guidelines set forth by New Hampshire law.***

### ***Just in Time (JIT) Training***

The first day of CCMRC emergency operations will include training as appropriate to the emergency.

First day (Just in Time) training will include:

- Patient Confidentiality (HIPPA) training.
- Blood borne Pathogen training.
- Specialized training specific to volunteer assignments.

### ***Outside-of-Area Deployment of Volunteers***

Some CC MRC volunteers may opt to be registered as “deployable” to areas outside of their home town. Notification of a need for volunteers will generally come from the National MRC office (for out-of-state emergencies) or from a government entity within the state.

Those volunteers who choose to register as deployable must meet established criteria for state-wide and out-of-state deployment. While criteria may be established pre-event, final approval authority is the responsibility of the requesting organization/agency.

When deployment opportunities arise, the CCMRC Director will notify volunteers via e-mail, phone, and/or regular post (if time allows). Notification will, as much as possible, include a description of the volunteer need, the dates and times of the need, what volunteers will be requested to do, and contact information.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Accountability**

**The MRC Director maintains direct responsibility for day-to-day administrative management and coordination tasks of the MRC. These tasks include:**

- Volunteer recruitment & retention.
- Maintenance of volunteer rosters.
- Volunteer assignments.
- Verification of volunteer credentials/licensure.
- Maintaining MRC Unit records.
- Issuance of volunteer ID badges.
- Organization of meetings and preparation of related documentation.
- Development & delivery of a quarterly newsletter.
- Routine communications with volunteers.
- Development of training curricula & delivery of training to volunteers.

### ***Volunteer Management System (VMS), Data Base***

MRC volunteer information is maintained in the Volunteer Management System (VMS) data base. Information includes essential data (address, phone, e-mail, licensure, special talents/limitations information) as well as data that contributes to efficient management of the CCMRC program (credentialing information, volunteer interests, volunteer's level of involvement, etc.).

The CCMRC Director is responsible for ensuring that volunteer information in the data base remains current. The Information Systems Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the VMS system, and serves as the in-house expert on data-base maintenance.

### ***Grievance Procedures***

Open communication allows for an exchange of information that results in early identification of problems, effective resolutions, involvement of staff & volunteers, timely responses to questions and appropriate sharing of information. The following performance standards apply to all individuals volunteering:

#### ***General:***

1. All people, clients and co-workers, will be treated with respect and dignity in all situations.
2. Each person demonstrates personal responsibility for open, direct and tactful communication.
3. Communication is first initiated as informal. Formal communication methods, such as letters, will be used only when informal methods have failed.

4. If unclear about any communication, each person is responsible for “checking it out” with the appropriate person.

#### *Informal Communication Channels:*

When questions arise, volunteers should go directly to the person responsible for that area of operations. If unsure of the identity of the responsible person, the volunteer may refer to the ICS organizational chart or contact the CCMRC Director. Within program areas, volunteers are requested to follow the lines of communication that are outlined in the ICS organizational chart. With regard to volunteer assignment-related issues and questions, the volunteer should contact the MRC Director.

#### *Formal Problem Resolution:*

When a problem is identified, the volunteer is encouraged to pro-actively be involved in finding a solution. The first step is to initiate the Informal Process as described above. If the results of the informal method are not satisfactory, the volunteer may proceed to this section.

#### *Conflict Management*

Issues between volunteers or between staff and volunteers should first be dealt with directly by the individuals experiencing the difficulty. A volunteer may advise the CCMRC Director. It is expected that the Director will provide coaching and assistance in identifying how best to address the conflict. Direct, tactful communication that does not blame or attack a co-worker is the expectation.

#### ***Disciplinary Procedures***

CCMRC volunteers, while performing duties or rendering services as a CCMRC volunteer, are expected to maintain high standards of conduct at all times.

Disciplinary action may be initiated to correct inappropriate performance, work-related behavior or behavior that reflects adversely upon the program and its other volunteers. The degree of disciplinary action shall relate to the gravity of the improper performance or conduct. Disciplinary actions may consist of:

- Informal Counseling
- Formal Counseling (Documented)
- Suspension
- Dismissal

Any of the following constitute cause for disciplinary actions:

- Incompetence
- Inefficiency
- Neglect of duty
- Dishonesty

- Possessing, dispensing, under the influence of or impaired by alcohol or an illegal substance while on duty, except in accordance with medical authorization.
- Commission or conviction of a felony or a misdemeanor, either of which would affect the volunteer's suitability for continued association with the MRC.
- Discourteous treatment of the public
- Willful disobedience of personnel policies, rules and regulations.
- Misuse of government/MRC property.
- Unsafe work habits.
- Seeking to obtain financial, sexual or political benefit from another employee, volunteer or client obtained by the use of force, fear or intimidation.
- Mishandling of public funds.
- Falsifying of records.
- Any other improper conduct or performance that constitutes cause for disciplinary action.

### ***Volunteer Dismissal***

CCMRC accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of CCMRC. CCMRC volunteers agree that CCMRC may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship. The Carroll County MRC volunteer may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever his/her relationship with the CCMRC. Notice of such a decision should be communicated to the Director as soon as possible.