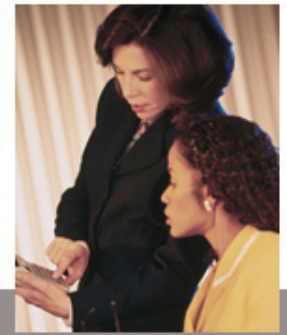




NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF

Community Health Centers



America's Voice for Community Health Care



Barbara Morita, PA
Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Alameda Health Consortium



My background

- Physician Assistant
- Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Alameda Health Consortium
- CA-6 Disaster Medical Assistance Team

- DMAT CA-6 Disaster Medical Assistance Team
 - World Trade Center - ground zero



One bus - 30.000 people . . .

Hurricane Katrina: Superdome, New Orleans Airport





California Wildfires



International

- Tsunami relief
- International Medical Corps:





Weakness of some plans:

- Written by one person
- From another institution's plan
 - Not necessarily a perfect fit
- From a template
 - Generic wording, categories and concepts
- Seen by only a small number of people



Your written plan

- IS A STARTING POINT

Point from which you launch your response

- Not an end point

never a complete or finished product



Famous quotations that apply

- “No battle plan survives first contact with the enemy”
 - German field General, WWI
- “In preparing for battle I have found that
Plans are useless,
But planning is indispensable”
 - General Dwight D Eisenhower



In real life

- Not able to take a plan off the shelf
- And use it exactly as written
 - World Trade Center
 - Implemented lifesaving safety measures based on the previous attack - bombing
 - Hurricane Katrina
 - Exercised a levee break 18 months prior to Katrina
 - But the plan “didn’t fit” the evolving situation.



Emergency Response Plan as a roadmap:

- Major landmarks making your way through a disaster zone
- Use it to map out the “most likely” route
- Helps keep your bearings
- Must constantly make adjustments to obstacles and changing conditions in order to reach your goals.



Using your plan:

May consider body of plan as reference book

- Annex: Quick guides, maps, contact # numbers, list of alternate sites

- Easy to reference and pull

- Include several options

- Write up “plan A” and send to the State

- But also write and keep options you considered



Written Plans - Summary

- Written plan is a starting point
 - Not an end point
 - Seldom (if ever) able to implement a plan simply as written
- The process of planning is invaluable.



Written plans – summary:

- Written plans do not implement themselves in inexperienced hands
- Leadership team familiar with their roles and the plans is critical to guide the response



Where to start?

- How do you eat an elephant?
 - One piece at a time.



Where to start?

- Vulnerability assessment
 - Events most likely to occur
 - Greatest danger/ impact

Bay Area Hazards

- Earthquake
- Earthquake
- Earthquake
- Firestorm

- Accidental hazardous materials release
- Floods, landslide
- Infectious outbreak
- Tsunami, terrorism





Where to start?

- Selected focus 2009 Alameda Health Consortium Clinics:
 - Clinic evacuation
 - Evacuation plans, teams, skills
 - Austere medical care at an alternate site
 - Staff support and survival



Building competency:

- Exercise Design approach
 - Building competency in steps
- Reference:
 - FEMA IS - 120A “Introduction To Exercise Design”
 - [Training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is120A1st.asp](https://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is120A1st.asp)



Building competency:

- Increasingly realistic drills
- Progression from simple to complex
- Steps build on each other.

- See handout



Building competency in steps

1. Written plans
 - Starting point

2. Orientation/ staff discussions
 - Familiarity and feedback

3. Trainings/ drills
 - Specific skills
 - Specific equipment

4. Tabletop Exercises

- Problem solve a scenario
- In a conference room
- Policy decisions
- Targets leadership/ management
- Good for diverse players, exploratory discussions
- Can be somewhat superficial



6. Functional Exercises

- Tabletop exercise with simulation “injects”
 - Players respond to messages (events/ problems) provided by simulators. Players call in to the “sim cell” to request resources, get information.
 - Conducted in “real time”, high pressure
 - Most applicable to EOC/MST/ management roles
 - Weakness: made-up responses can be unrealistic
(I would arrange 20 busses with volunteer drivers to take our patients . . .)



7. Full Scale Exercise

- Use real sites, staff, communication, etc
- Involve many (or all) levels of staff
- Volunteer victims
- Sometimes inter-agency
- 12-18 months to prepare
 - Facilitators, controllers, evaluators
 - Media, communications
 - Preparatory planning mtgs, drills, tabletops



8. Focused real participation (not a FEMA category)
 - Real activation of a section of your plan
 - Real people in real positions using real equipment
 - Less ambitious than full scale drill
 - Broader and deeper than a skills drill
 - Activate ICS structure and leadership
 - Might not involve your entire agency
 - Adjust size to your needs

5. Intermediate steps:
 - SOP: standard operating procedures (or similar)
 - Step by step guides Presumes familiarity
 - Steps to be taken or considered
 - Where to start
 - “don’t forget to do . . .”
 - Job Action Sheets
 - Reflect your key positions
 - Steps each position takes or considers
 - Presumes familiarity and training



- Summary
 - Exercise Design approach is helpful
 - ie: building competency in steps
 - From simple to complex exercise
 - Train from theoretical toward real people doing real activities



Essential training

- Two quotes and the science of why hands on in person training is essential:

“In an emergency we don’t rise to the level of the situation, we sink to the level of our training”

- anonymous emergency responder



Essential training:

“First responders to terror attacks will tell you their ability to perform when it isn’t a drill

Has everything to do with how they performed when it was a drill.”

- Why is this?



Why Exercises work:

“The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes - And Why”

By Amanda Ripley

Journalist for Time magazine



“the unthinkable”- quote

- One of the main lessons is that panic, denial and fear may be inevitable during a disaster, but your brain will perform best in a stressful situation if you have already put it through a few rehearsals.
- That is why the fire drill is so important. You need to make the walk down the stairs to the exit so that your brain can store the physical memory of the experience.



“the unthinkable” - quote

- “Your brain works by pattern recognition, and when it’s in an extremely frightening situation it sorts through a database for a script”
- “It’s important to get into the stairs and actually go down them. Your brain relies on that memory and responds to it much more quickly and fully than words.”



“the unthinkable” - quote

“You and your co-workers . . . are going to be there, not homeland security para-troopers. The more confidence you have before the event happens, the less debilitating the fear will be and the better your performance will be.”

- The more memories you have stored of drills together the more directed and cohesive your staff will be . . .



Thank You

questions?