Serious weather-related or other types of disasters can severely impact our ability to safely care for our residents. The evaluation and decision process to shelter in place or to evacuate residents is critical to best care for our communities of residents. Last fall’s Hurricane Harvey posed a widespread risk to several nursing facilities in the Houston, Texas area. This session will cover case presentations and group discussion of the following aspects of responding to a disaster: ongoing baseline disaster preparedness for nursing facilities, the decision-making process when a substantial threat is identified, mobilizing resources to assist in facility evacuation, tracking the evacuation of individual residents, assuring that medications and other services remain available for residents throughout the process.

**Learning Objectives**

Discuss the physical and regulatory risks of hurricanes and other natural disasters.

Demonstrate knowledge of the components of a comprehensive disaster response plan.

Explain how effective coordination of the interdisciplinary team is crucial to a successful response.

Describe how effective communication with the electronic medical record system is essential for coordination of pharmacy providers, administrators, directors of nursing, and medical directors in the facilities that are evacuating and receiving residents.

**Presenter(s):** Stacey Hallissey, PT; Annaliese Impink, JD; Mary Evans, MD, CMD

**Presenter(s) Disclosures:** Stacey Hallissey, PT Has a financial disclosure: Sava Senior Care LLC: Employee; Mary Evans, MD, CMD: Has a financial disclosure: Save SeniorCare Administrative Services, LLC: Consultant; All other speakers have reported they have no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
Disaster Preparedness 101

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Speaker Disclosures
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Note: ‘Disclosure’ must never include the use of a corporate logo, trade name or a product-group message of an ACCME-defined commercial interest.

Learning Objectives
By the end of the session, participants will be able to:
• Understand the physical and regulatory risks of hurricanes and other natural disasters
• Demonstrate knowledge of the components of a comprehensive disaster response plan
• Understand how effective coordination of the IDT is crucial to a successful response
• Describe how effective communication with EMR is essential for coordination of caregivers and resources

Typical Atlantic Hurricane Season
• June 1- November 30
• Number of significant hurricanes per year is increasing

Hurricane Harvey August 2017
• Category 4 cyclone
• Wind gusts to 132 mph
• 40” of rain
• $125 Billion in damage
• 89 fatalities
• 30,000 people displaced

Disaster Preparedness 101
• It is greatly beneficial to have a “well-oiled plan” for emergencies, well in advance
Disaster Preparedness 101

- An Emergency Preparation Plan is not just for Hurricanes
- Can be useful for other regionally-specific occurrences – earthquakes, wildfire, floods and tornadoes

Small Group Exercise (5-10 minutes)

- Discuss with your group the essential steps for emergency response to the natural disaster listed on the paper on your table

Before the Storm

Procedures and Checklists

- These should be established AND communicated to employees.
- Pre-season calls for storm preparations should begin in early May.
- Disaster Preparedness is part of your Facility Assessment requirement of the CMS Final Rule

Community and Company Support

- Be aware of your local and state Emergency Services and how they operate and/or communicate.
- Standing or on-going contracts with local providers are helpful (for example, a contract with a local bus company is very helpful, especially if FEMA moves in to commandeer all transportation in a region).

Emergency Contact Information

- Have UPDATED contact information readily available for:
  - Facility Personnel
  - Residents’ Families / Responsible Parties
  - Utility Providers (Emergency Numbers, not general listings)
  - Hospitals / Physicians/ Medical Director
  - Emergency Management Services
  - Fire Department
  - Law Enforcement
Emergency Contact Info

- Updated numbers, in case of evacuation, for:
  - Security (for empty buildings)
  - Potential Receiving Facilities
  - Hotels/Motels/Other Lodging in destination area

Facility Preparation

- Preparation for Extended Weather Conditions
  - Consider rolling storm shutters for facilities in closest proximity to coast.
  - Boarding up (keep supplies ON-HAND, windows prepped). Post-storm storage plans to increase life span of supplies.
  - Secure patio furniture, trash cans, anything that could become a projectile.
  - Check trees – trim overhanging branches, remove diseased trees that could fall on building or critical systems.

Facility Preparation

- STAGE NEARBY, but out of immediate area anticipating storm effects:
  - Mobile Generators
  - Fuel for Generators
  - REMEMBER, after the storm, these will be impossible to find!!!

Operational Preparation

- Resident and Employee Lists – must be up-to-date!
- Know what your Transportation needs will be should you evacuate – Define “Special Needs”
  - Who can go by Regular Transport (Buses)?
  - Who needs Special Transport (Ambulance)?
  - Keep Dialysis needs in mind!!

Operational Preparation

- Reach out to providers to assure they are on standby to extent possible:
  - Dietary
  - Hospitals / Physicians
  - Linen
  - Pharmacy
  - Dialysis
  - Ambulance
  - Supplies

Operational Preparation

- Know what you need for the actual evacuation process (a plan for keeping residents and their medications and medical records easily accessible).
  - Electronic Medical Record (EMR) remote access greatly facilitates communication between facilities and pharmacies
Should we stay or should we go?

Physical risks

- Resident safety
- Staff safety
- Are the roads passable?
- Will it be harder to evacuate later?

Should we stay or should we go?

Regulatory risks

- Immediate jeopardy risk if residents are harmed

Should we stay or should we go?

Legal risks

- What is company policy on evacuations?
- Be aware of legal risks either way!
  - Evacuation without official order.
  - Staying behind when official evacuation order has been issued.

Decision is made. Now what?

Sheltering in Place

- Generator
  - Has it been tested lately?
  - Is it fully fueled? Schedule top offs throughout the storm.
  - Know the electrical capacity ahead of time
  - What can it support?

Sheltering in Place

- UPDATED Residents’ Family member / Responsible party list
- UPDATED Employee List
- Staffing Plan – bring in extra staff, have them plan to shelter at the facility – prepare to manage their expectations!!

Decision is made. Now what?

Sheltering in Place

- Bring in Supplies – Order Extra! (and then order more!)
  - Water (drinking water / other uses)
  - Food
  - Medical/Sanitary Supplies
  - Pharmacy
  - Linens
  - Satellite phones
  - Flashlights
  - Non-perishables & paper goods
  - Cell phones, extra CHARGED batteries, car chargers, etc.
Decision is made. Now what?

Sheltering in Place
To extent feasible – offer to shelter families and pets of staff members to allow them to focus on residents

Decision is made. Now what?

Evacuating
- UPDATED Residents’ Family member / Responsible party list
- UPDATED Employee List
- Evaluate and Update your Transportation Needs
- Who can go by Regular Transport (Buses)?
- Who needs Special Transport (Ambulance)?
- Keep Dialysis Residents in mind!!

Decision is made. Now what?

Evacuating
- Staffing Decisions
- Evacuation site
- In Transit needs (lunches, medication administration, turning & repositioning staffing)
- Plans to accept residents at receiving facility

Note: HOPE for a short term evacuation, but PLAN for a long term evacuation!

Decision is made. Now what?

Evacuating
- Preparing for Transport
  - Request loading assistance from local fire department
  - Prepare resident records, meds, food/hydration for transit
- Transit Plan
- Staffing (buses, home facility, etc.)

During the storm

Evacuating
- Management needs to clearly convey information pertaining to food and lodging, pet evacuations staff family members’ evacuations, transportation costs.
Central Command Center?

• This can be beneficial before, but especially during and immediately after a storm.
• Allows facility staff to take care of their residents. Command Center helps with:
  • Transportation Deployment
  • Resident / Employee Tracking
  • Storm Watch / Rising Water Advisories
  • Supply Monitoring / Ordering
  • Family contacts and notifications

Central Command Center?

• Also –
  • Can coordinate IDT members
  • Can provide intermediary with state / local agencies during event.
  • Ability to direct emergency services where needed quickly from an unaffected area.

Central Command Center

• Helpful to schedule periodic check-in calls during the course of the event (conference calls, etc.)
  • Provides facilities with security of not being isolated
  • Allows for real-time notification of evolving situations (tree is down, power flickering, etc.)

After the storm

• Picking up the Pieces

Insurance considerations

• Photographs are helpful!
  • If something needs to be cleaned, or moved before insurance adjusters can get onsite, take a photograph BEFORE proceeding.

Insurance Considerations

• Documentation! Documentation! Documentation! Keep copies of everything!
  • Emergency Declarations / Tax Exemptions
  • Hotel Bills
  • Transportation Bills
  • Supply Bills
  • Emergency Repairs / Contractor Invoices
Regulatory Obligations

- Ensure safe environment for residents!
- If evacuated – transportation back to home facility
- Family notification regarding re-entry or closure
- State notification regarding intentions (resident locations, company intentions)
- Resident Relocation Management (if necessary)

Rebuilding Physically

- Things to keep in mind:
  - Even MINOR damage to a facility can require movement of residents, both temporarily and/or long term.
  - Remediation of hazards uncovered or caused by storm damage:
    - Asbestos
    - Mold

Rebuilding Mentally

- Things to keep in mind:
  - Displaced employees – often with no access to credit and/or no self-accountability
  - Stressed residents and families
  - Exhausted Staff
  - General clutter and confusion

Rebuilding Legally

- Things to keep in mind:
  - Remember notification requirements of State Agencies / Authorities related to relocations, closures, etc.

Small Group Discussion Recap

- Review with your group what changes you would make to your essential steps for emergency response to the natural disaster
- Share with your group your plan to investigate and address your facility’s disaster preparedness plan

Conclusion

- Are you ready for a disaster?
- Questions?
Thank you!

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