



**Citizen Corps News:
Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Units from Across the County Report on H1N1 Activities**

Since the initial announcement of the 2009 H1N1 Influenza outbreak in April, Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units from across the country have reported into the national office on their involvement. MRC units are maintaining their situational awareness, reviewing their pandemic response plans with their local public health, medical and emergency response partners, and planning for possible strategic national stockpile distributions of antiviral medications. In addition, MRC units have conducted H1N1 flu-related activities in their communities, descriptions of these activities are below.

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) program strengthens communities by helping medical, public health and other volunteers offer their expertise throughout the year as well as during local emergencies and other times of community need. MRC volunteers work in coordination with existing local emergency response programs and also supplement existing community public health initiatives. The MRC program, a National Citizen Corps Program Partner, is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and has over 900 units across the country. More information can be found on the following website: www.medicalreservecorps.gov.

REGION I

Massachusetts

- Boston MRC hosted H1N1 training for response and leadership level volunteers.
- Amherst Health Department MRC staffed a First Aid station at local fair to distribute information on H1N1 and to display information on emergency and personal preparedness.

REGION II

New Jersey

- Burlington MRC assisted local health authorities by staffing phones and working on issues related to patient tracking/follow-up.
- Monmouth County MRC sent 2 volunteers to state call center to answer questions about H1N1 (approximately 2,400 calls were received).

New York

- New York City MRC physician volunteers assisted the NYC Dept of Health & Mental Hygiene with staffing of the Provider Access Line call center to answer questions related to H1N1.

REGION III

Maryland

- Montgomery County MRC opened their Public Health Information Line (PHIL). The MRC volunteers have been utilized for every shift to answer phones and take questions from the community.

Pennsylvania

- Southern Allegheny's EMS Council MRC made 250 H1N1 bags to hand out to church members to provide information from CDC on H1N1.

Virginia

- Loudoun County MRC, Eastern Shore MRC, and Henrico County MRC all have volunteers who are assisting with logistics within their local EOC's and assisting in call centers to convey public health information related to the H1N1 virus.

REGION IV

Alabama

- North Alabama MRC was activated by the Huntsville/Madison County EMA to staff a phone bank with MRC volunteer nurses and physicians to answer questions and take information regarding the H1N1 influenza.

Florida

- Flagler MRC is assisting the Department of Health and scheduling presentations dealing with Pandemic flu to the faith based organizations in the area.

Kentucky

- Gateway District Health Department MRC is assisting in a public information campaign concerning the H1N1 virus and all volunteers have been put on stand-by.

North Carolina

- Chatham MRC volunteers provided public health education on H1N1 by reaching out to 200 adults and distributed 45 children's disaster preparedness coloring books to prepare the community on emergency preparedness and response.

REGION V

Illinois

- Douglas County MRC was activated to staff a call center. Volunteers are also assisting in SNS drop site activities
- Maine Township MRC assisted the local hospital with their potential need for surge capacity.
- Will County MRC was activated to staff a call center.
- Oak Park Department of Public Health is on an active stand-by alert status after deployment of a SNS to state of Illinois.
- Bureau & Putnam County MRC have been put on alert to answer calls for questions and concerns related to H1N1.

Indiana

- The Allen County MRC, in partnership with the local health department, established a hotline for local residents to call with questions and concerns about the H1N1 virus.

Ohio

- Franklin County MRC Volunteers underwent training on Contact Investigation and are staffing call centers
- Logan County MRC called 98 community leaders to invite them to an H1N1 community planning meeting.

- Holmes County MRC assisted in diagnostic testing of patients with risk factors for H1N1 flu.
- Lorain County MRC was activated to staff a call center to answer question about the H1N1 outbreak.

Wisconsin

- Southeast Wisconsin MRC volunteers are staffing call centers, and clinics where they are performing diagnostic testing on patients.

REGION VI

Arkansas

- South Arkansas MRC volunteers are distributing information on H1N1 flu to local pharmacies, convenient stores, grocery stores, and other locations.
- Western Arkansas River Valley MRC educated local clinicians and volunteers about H1N1 Flu identification and treatment.

Louisiana

- Calcasieu Parish MRC is helping the Regional Office of Public Health in Lake Charles, LA with calls to hospitals, doctors' offices and other healthcare facilities to check on their needs and current availability of supplies. They also are delivering test kits to healthcare facilities. Volunteers also have been involved in community mitigation efforts, teaching proper hand washing at local schools. Approximately 22 volunteers have been involved with this effort.
- Northwest Louisiana MRC is providing care to local residents at free clinic. They also are providing education to vulnerable populations in the Caddo-Bossier area.
- New Orleans MRC volunteers have been involved in community education on H1N1 flu and recruitment of volunteers.

New Mexico

- Southern New Mexico MRC has provided H1N1 updates to their partners including Americorps, American Red Cross, American Legion, and New Mexico State University Health Programs. They also have assisted in coordination of community planning and mitigation efforts. They held a briefing for the local Oñate High Junior MRC on a potential role with community education.

Oklahoma

- 18 MRC units have been activated to assist state health department personnel with staffing their phone bank. The phone bank is expanding its hours of operation due to high call volume. This information line is answering calls from medical providers as well as the general public.

Texas

- Dallas County MRC is assisting with staffing phone lines and distributing informational flyers from the County Health Department at bus stops across the county.
- Brazoria County MRC is assisting the county Emergency Management Agency. They are staffing phone bank for incoming calls from concerned citizens and will be assisting with preparedness activities. They are validating phone lists of community partners and gathering emergency contact information for every pharmacy in the county.

- Denton County MRC volunteers are staffing the drop off and pick up laboratory at the Health Department. The lab is supporting local doctors' offices that need the Health Department to collect their specimens. Volunteers also distributed information flyers to patients visiting the health department.
- Tarrant County volunteers are providing assistance with conducting basic contact investigations, staffing phones, and with assembling flu kits.
- Gregg County MRC is assisting Gregg County Health Department with public information distribution on H1N1 Flu.

REGION VIII

Colorado

- Boulder County MRC volunteers are answering phone calls from community on H1N1 flu and preparing to assist with medication distribution if needed.
- Fremont County MRC is organizing and delivering information packets on H1N1 flu to physician's offices.
- Mesa County MRC volunteers are making presentations to community on H1N1 flu.

Utah

- Davis County MRC is conducting POD training in anticipation of future mass vaccinations.

REGION IX

Arizona

- Medical Reserve Corps of Southern Arizona (MRCSA) members are staffing alternate care sites, and the Student MRC has been placed on alert. Mental Health members met for response planning. MRCSA Task Force members are currently staffing the Health Department's Call Center.

California

- The San Francisco MRC leader was featured on a local television news station regarding H1N1 preparedness.
- Orange County MRC was activated to assist in the receiving of supplies from the Stockpile. The MRC volunteers were able to receive and inventory the cache in one hour. Orange County MRC was also asked to provide nurses to assist Public Health with their H1N1 Flu Hotline. Four MRC nurses volunteered in four hour shifts.
- Sacramento Regional MRC is assisting Sacramento County Public Health with picking-up lab specimens from area health facilities and transporting them to the lab. Volunteers delivered testing kits to and picked up lab specimens 18 times from area health facilities and transported the specimens to the Sacramento County Public Health Lab. Requests to transport lab specimens are increasing. They currently have 10-12 volunteers available per day to make the pick-ups and deliveries.
- The Marin County MRC had 44 volunteers active, working 355 hours. The volunteers donated \$15, 074 worth of services. They provided the following services: Department Operations Center (DOC) set-up and logistical support; public "Hotline" training and staffing; providing DOC Unit Leaders; providing a Public Health Nursing Liaison; Mental Health support for DOC Staff and hotline call takers; field intelligence gathering; providing an IT technical specialist; providing administrative support; providing county laboratory support; and augmenting clinic and hospital staffing.

REGION X

Washington

- Thurston County MRC has been deployed to assist the local health department with communication to special populations, phone triage, surveillance, and assistance to the health officer. In addition the MRC coordinator will be utilizing MRC volunteers to recruit for future fall flu season.
- Whatcom County MRC volunteers have been involved in respirator fit testing for the local hospital. They are running 4 fit test stations from 7 am to 1 am with a goal to perform fit testing on 1000 people over 20 days. They also are staffing a telephone triage call line. Whatcom County MRC also developed a potential Alternate Care Facility for surge capacity in event of hospital overflow. Whatcom County MRC staffed a phone bank in conjunction with Peace Health St. Joseph's Hospital.
- Snohomish County MRC volunteers are staffing a call center, seven days a week, from 9am to 4pm to answer questions about H1N1 influenza.