

Emergency Preparedness and Primary Care Medical Practices

Session 5 – Communications During Disasters

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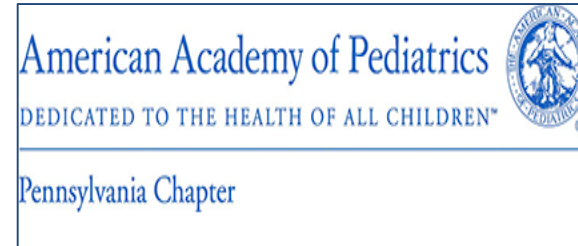
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Overview of Series – Systems Approach to Community Medical Practices and Emergency Preparedness

6 Mini Webinars

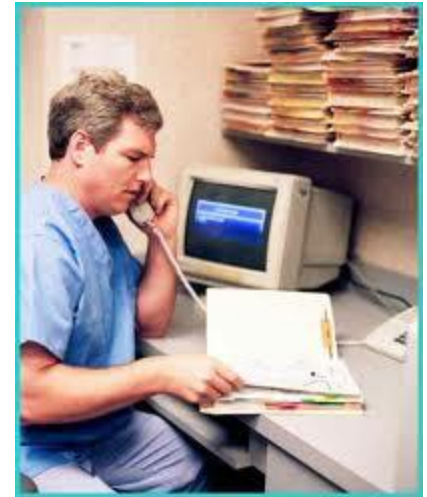
- Primary care physicians and preparedness
- Hazard and risk assessment
- Emergency planning for practices
- Evaluating the plan
- Communication with patients and partners
- Preparing patients with special health care needs for disasters

What are the standards for emergency preparedness and management planning for community medical practices?

- Joint Commission Standards for Ambulatory Care - 2014
- US Department of HHS, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA):
 - PIN (Policy Information Notice) Health Center Emergency Management Program Expectations
 - Form 10: Annual Emergency Preparedness Report
- Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) Emergency Preparedness Regulations for Rural and Federal Health Centers
 - Issued for review in December 2013, under revision

Practice Emergency Communication Plans

- Internal
 - Staff communications
- External communications
 - Health care system
 - Public safety agencies and other organizations
 - Patients



Communicating with Staff

- Description of plan
 - Redundant methods
 - Telephone
 - Text messaging
 - Email
 - Social media
 - Maintenance of database
 - Testing on a regular basis
 - Assignment of responsibility

Emergency Communication with Staff

This list contains sensitive information and should remain confidential

Name/Position	Preferred Contact Method	Home Phone	Cell Phone	Office Phone	Email	Social Media



External Communications

- Public health alerts
 - CDC, local and state health departments
 - <https://han.pa.gov/>
 - CDC HAN and Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity
 - Fax and email
- Emergency management alerts
 - Email, text messages
 - <http://www.readynotifypa.org/>
- Health system notifications



Emergency Contacts and Health Care Partners

Name/Position	Contact Person	Phone	Email
County Health Department			
Township/Municipal Emergency Management Agency			
County Emergency Management Agency			
Local Police Department (non-emergency calls)			
Local Fire Department (non-emergency calls)			
Hospital Emergency Department			
Hospital Pharmacy (or Administration or other office)			
Second Hospital ED			
Third Hospital ED			
Fourth Hospital ED			
Fifth Hospital ED			
Other practices/clinics/FQHCs			
Local EMS Agency			
Local Red Cross			
Other Community Partners (i.e., social service agencies, home health organizations)			

Emergency Communications with Health Care Partners



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Utilities, Vendors, and Supply Partners			
Service	Contact Person	Business Telephone	Emergency Telephone
Utility Provider (gas)			
Utility Provider (electricity)			
Utility Provider (water)			
Plumber			
Telephone Provider			
Internet Provider			
Information/Technology Support (EHR vendor)			
Medical Supply and Equipment Vendor			
Medical Supply and Equipment Vendor			
Medical Supply and Equipment Vendor			
Facility Management			
Insurance			
Towing Service			
Plowing Service (Snow)			
Tree Removal			
Fire Protection Contractor			
Elevator Service			
Hazardous Materials Cleanup			
Cleanup / Disaster Restoration			
<Other>			
<Other>			

Contact Information - Vendors



**DIAL 9-1-1 IN ANY LIFE-SAFETY
EMERGENCY THAT AFFECTS THE
PRACTICE OR CLINIC**

Interacting with News Media

- Health system may have designated spokesperson
- Practice/Clinic should identify spokesperson
- Integrate with Incident Command System if activated



Name/Position	Contact Person	Phone	Email
Media Contact: Television			
Media Contact: Radio			
Media Contact: Newspaper			

Communicating with Patients in Emergencies

- Patients may want information from you before, during, and after a disaster:
 - General information about practice status
 - Advice about what to do to protect health
 - Questions about symptoms, risks
- Prepare for high volume of calls
- Prepare for office closure, utility disruption



Checklist for Patient Communications

- Have a plan for communicating with patients and families:
 - Practice emergency procedures
 - Patient data needs
 - General disaster information
- Redundant methods
- Assign responsibility
- Update as needed (source information from public health agencies, professional societies, health system)
- Plain language
- Targeted information for high-risk patients

Methods

- Phone and voice messaging
 - Template scripts (on next slide)
 - When to come to office
 - When to go to Emergency Room
 - How to prevent illness
 - Go to website for more info

PHONE SCRIPT – VOICE MESSAGE TEMPLATE (INFECTIOUS DISEASE SCENARIO)

Hello,

You have reached *<practice name>*. If this is a true medical emergency, please hang up and dial 911 or go to your nearest emergency room. For information regarding the recent *<incident/outbreak>*, please press *<telephone menu option when integrated into menu options>*.

The following message has information on the recent *<incident/outbreak>* of *<disease>*. This information is also available on our website, *<web address>*.

<Disease> is caused by a *<pathogen: bacterium, virus, etc.>* and can make you and your family sick. *<Disease>* is spread by *<infection route>* and is most likely to affect *<high-risk populations>*. Those who are infected with *<disease>* are likely to have the following symptoms: *<list symptoms>*.

If you are concerned that you or a loved one might be infected with *<disease>*, here are some recommendations *<list recommendations>*.

If you or a loved one has any of the following symptoms, you/he/she needs to be seen by one of the office pediatricians: *<list serious symptoms>*. If you have any of these symptoms, please press *<telephone menu option>* to speak with the nurse.

To help prevent the spread of *<disease>*, you can do the following: *<prevention actions>*. To schedule an appointment to receive the *<disease>* vaccine, please return to the main menu by pressing *<telephone menu option>*.

If your symptoms do not improve after *<number of hours/days>*, please call the office.

To repeat this message, please press *<telephone menu option>*. To return to the main menu, please press *<telephone menu option>*. If you have further questions not answered by this script, please press *<telephone menu option>* to speak directly with a nurse.



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Methods

- Website
 - Fact sheet about emergency and status of practice
 - Can replicate for waiting room
 - Link to from social media

Template Environmental Hazard Fact Sheet Patient Information

MESSAGE

What happened: There was a release of *<chemical name or 'an unknown chemical'>* due to *<a railroad accident/a truck crash/leak/spill/cause not yet confirmed>* that occurred at *<time –hour>* *<today/yesterday>*, *<date: month and day>* at *<location>*.

Experts from the *<Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Pennsylvania Department of Health/Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency/Department of Environmental Protection, etc.>* are on site assessing the situation and will be providing updates.

Here is what you and your family can do right now.

- Remain calm. Focus on taking care of yourself and your family. If you have children, help them remain calm.
- If you were exposed to *<chemical>*, you may have these symptoms: *<list symptoms and timeframe to occur>*.
- If you think you may have been exposed to *<chemical with delayed effects>*, the effects may be delayed. Because *<chemical>* can cause *<effects>*, we recommend that you *<actions to take at home, i.e. change clothes and throw away exposed clothing, shower and shampoo, etc.>*.
- You should come to our office if you or a loved one has the following symptoms: *<list symptoms – include child-specific symptoms if necessary>*.
- You should go to the emergency room if you or a loved one has the following symptoms: *<list symptoms – include child-specific symptoms if necessary>*.
- If you come to our office or go to the emergency room, staff will *<actions to be taken such as masking, disinfection, etc.>*.
- *<Other advice depending on circumstances – may include: leave your home, stay indoors, shower, don't drink tap water>*.
- *<Source of advice>* recommends that adults and children exposed to this chemical take *<medication>* *<duration>**<dose>*. You can obtain this medicine at *<locations>* OR this medication is not yet available. The most recent estimate of when it will be available is *<date/time>* at *<locations>*. Until the medicine is available, *<source of advice>* recommends that you *<for example - drink one cup of water per hour/see if you can get your child to drink frequently/other advice>*.
- If you are breastfeeding, the *<source of advice>* recommends that you continue/do not continue breastfeeding as usual.

Our practice is *<open/closed>*. We are *<keeping/not keeping>* regular appointments so if you have a scheduled appointment, *<come in/do not come in>* at your scheduled time.

We expect to provide an update *<when – be realistic>*.



Text Messaging

- Short messages that can reach most everyone
- Mass texting services
 - Operational when other communication methods are overloaded
 - Electronic medical record may incorporate
- Routine practice uses (e.g., appointment reminders)
- Emergency uses (e.g., practice closure, vaccine availability, links to health system information)

Email and Patient Portals

- May be supported by electronic medical record
- Patient portal allows for secure communication (EMAIL DOES NOT)
- Targeted communication for high-risk patients

Social Media

- Very effective for practices with younger patients
- Establish strategy for using
 - Frequency, which channels, who posts, etc.
 - Type of information
- Establish user base before disasters
 - General health information
 - Practice information
- Follow reputable information sources by “liking” or “following”
- Become trusted source for accurate information
- Link to practice website, other sources



Examples

TEMPLATES AND EXAMPLES – PANDEMIC INFLUENZA:

Twitter post:

"Possible #pandemicflu in US. Follow @CDCflu for info. No cases here yet."

Facebook post:

"CDC reports possible pandemic flu cases. <__> health department says none in our community, but we will continue to monitor the situation and keep you updated."

FLU VACCINE:

Twitter post:

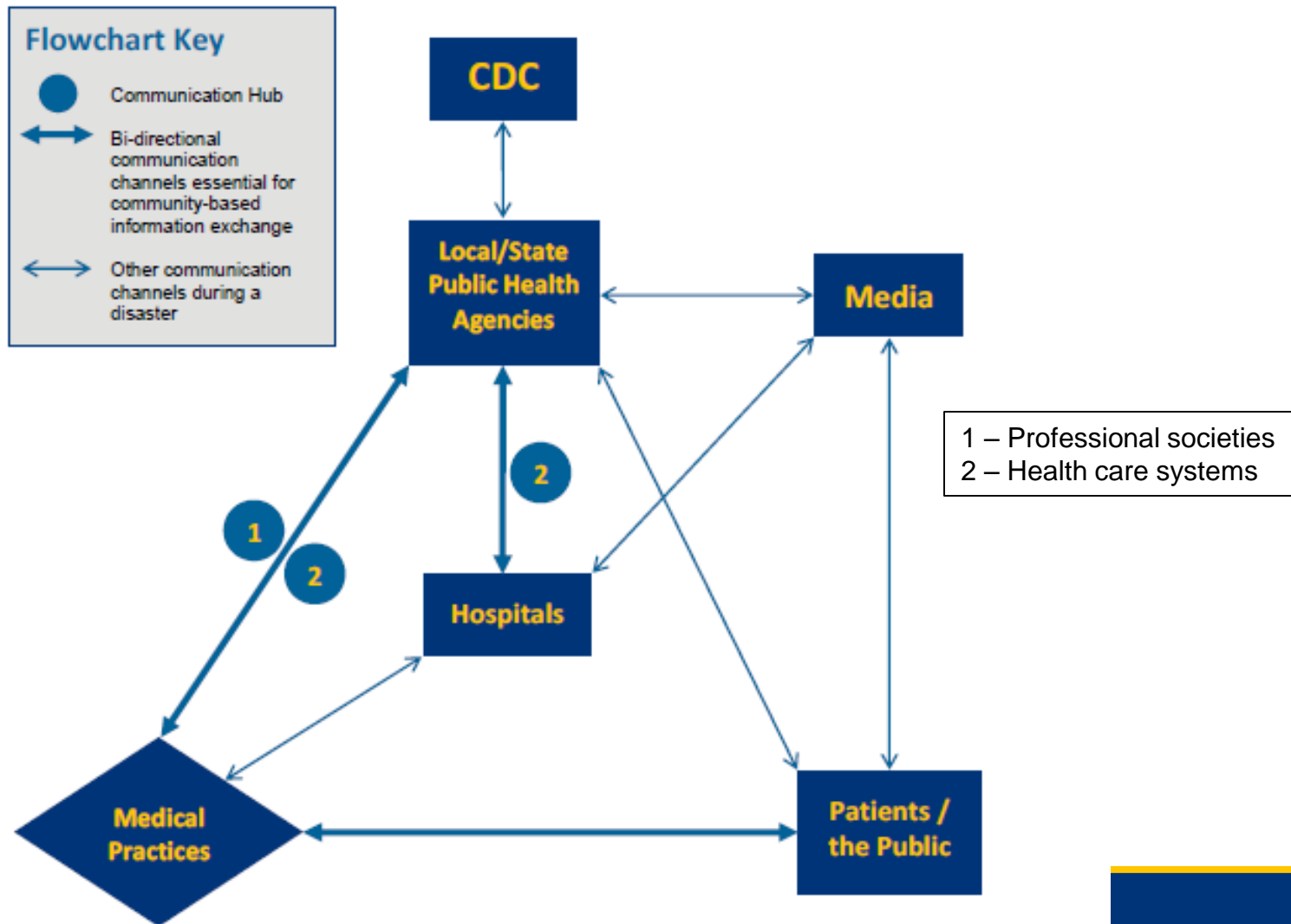
"We have #flushots! Will be giving this Saturday 11a-3p. Parent/guardian must be present for children to get vaccine."

Facebook post:

"<__> health department reports 3 people have died in Pennsylvania from pandemic flu. Protect yourself and your kids by getting the vaccine."

COMMUNICATION FLOWCHART

Sharing Information with Medical Practices during a Public Health Emergency



Next Steps

- Materials on PA Medical Society and Drexel CPHRC websites:
 - <http://www.pamedsoc.org/MainMenuCategories/Practice-Management/Management/Emergency-Preparedness>
 - <http://publichealth.drexel.edu/research/research-centers/center-for-public-health-readiness-communication/our-projects/pcp-resources/>
- Technical assistance

Continuing Medical Education Credit

- If you have registered for the live webinar, you will receive an email with a link to obtain CME and complete an evaluation.
- If you are viewing the archive of the webinar, please follow the instructions on the webpage where the training information is located to obtain CME.

QUESTIONS?



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