Emergency Planning Guide

Disasters and emergencies can happen anytime. Residents of Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities are among the most vulnerable citizens in terms of being affected by these disasters. Therefore, all Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities should plan to protect their residents and staff from "All Hazards". It is not only a **licensure requirement**; it is also a good business practice.

"All Hazards" include infectious diseases outbreaks (such as norovirus, tuberculosis, and pandemic influenza), weather events (such as hurricanes, floods, and snow storms), disasters (such as earthquakes, fires, and explosions), and terrorism.

Some of these hazards are more or less likely to occur, and some will have a larger impact on your facility if they do occur. However, rather than trying to write a separate plan for every possible event, we recommend developing a general response plan that can be used for all hazards. This plan should be coordinated with partner agencies and organizations that may assist you in any disaster response. These agencies include the local health department, local emergency management officials, social services, hospitals, medical equipment and supply contractors, and other long term care facilities.

The "All Hazards" response plan should include the following elements:
- Key leadership/decision makers and line of secession
    - Who is responsible for making decisions in an emergency?
    - If that person is not available, who else can make the decisions?
- Human resources (both on-duty and off-duty)
    - If an emergency occurs at any time of day or night, how do you contact your staff to let them know?
    - With increased staff absences during an emergency situation, how would your facility ensure staffing levels?
    - Where might extra or temporary staff come from?
    - Does staff have the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)? (see also below)
- Education of Residents and/or their families
    - What will residents be told about the emergency when it occurs?
    - How will residents and/or their families be informed about the response plan?
    - What services provided residents (dining, exercise room, etc.) would be discontinued during the emergency?
- Evacuation and relocation of residents and staff
    - How do you get everyone safely out of the building?
    - Is there another facility that you can transfer your residents?
    - How will you transport your residents to that facility?
    - Will the evacuation plan be audited or tested during the year?
- Closure of your facility to new admissions, visitors and non-essential personnel

- What situations might require you to close your facility to new admissions
- What situations might require you to close your facility to visitors?
- What are the procedures?
- Identify and obtain emergency equipment and supplies as needed. Examples:
  - Does your facility have a generator or back-up power?
  - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - Automated Emergency Defibrillators
  - Emergency Flashlights
  - Weather Band Radios
  - PA System
  - Security Cameras
  - Bottled Water
  - Non-perishable foods
  - Oxygen cylinders
  - First Aid Kits
  - Wheelchairs
- Infection Control Procedures
  - When will they be implemented?
  - How will you communicate that to staff, residents, and visitors?
- Planning and Communication with partner agencies
  - When will these partners be contacted when an emergency is identified?
  - Who among the key leaders will be responsible for contacting these partners?
  - Local Hospitals
  - Local Health Department
  - Local Emergency Response Agencies
  - Medical equipment and supply contractors
  - Food service contractors
  - Other long term care facilities
  - Other agencies/organizations
- Maintaining patient medical records
  - Are medical records safe from fire, flood or other hazards?
  - Are back-up records maintained (off-site or other location)?

To assist you in this effort, CDC's "Long-Term Care and Other Residential Facilities Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist" is included. Most items in the planning guide are appropriate to all hazards. However, there may be additional planning issues that you may need to consider that are not included in the pandemic flu planning checklist. Because each facility is unique, you should have an emergency plan that is tailored to fit your specific needs.

The staff at Henrico Health Department is here to assist you in developing your internal plans. To contact us, please refer to the contact information in the front of the booklet.

Emergency Preparedness Licensure Requirements, as per the Virginia Administrative Code (VAC):

- Nursing Homes: 12 VAC 5-371-190
  http://www.vdh.state.va.us/OLC/Laws/documents/nursingHomes/nursing%20facility%20regs.pdf (Page 19)
- Assisted Living Facilities: 22 VAC 40-71-570 through 22 VAC 40-71-590
  http://leg1.state.va.us/000/reg/TOC22040.HTM#C0071 (Chapter 71)

Web-based resources:
Public Health:
- Henrico County Health Department:
  - General website:
    - www.co.henrico.va.us/health/
  - Public Health Bytes monthly newsletter:
    - www.publichealthbytes.org
- Virginia Department of Health (VDH):
  - General Website:
    - http://www.vdh.state.va.us/
  - Pandemic Flu information:
    - http://www.vdh.state.va.us/PandemicFlu/
  - Emergency Preparedness and Response information
    - http://www.vdh.state.va.us/EPR/
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - General Website:
    - www.cdc.gov
  - Pandemic Influenza Information
    - http://www.pandemicflu.gov/
  - Long Term Care Facility pandemic flu planning checklist:
    - http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/healthcare/longtermcarechecklist.html
  - Emergency Preparedness and Response:
    - http://www.bt.cdc.gov/
- World Health Organization:
  - General Website:
    - http://www.who.int/
  - Avian Influenza
    - http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/index.html

Disaster Preparedness Resources:
- Henrico Division of Fire:
  - General Website:
    - http://www.co.henrico.va.us/fire/
  - Disaster Preparedness Manual:
    - http://www.co.henrico.va.us/fire/pdfs/cpm_man.pdf
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management:
  - http://www.vaemergency.com/index.cfm

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):
  - http://www.ready.gov
- The American Red Cross:
  - Local Chapter:
    - http://greaterrichmond.redcross.org
  - National Chapter:
    - http://www.redcross.org/