



RHPC Board Meeting
March 5, 2021
Go To Meeting



Call to Order

Dr. Kevin Schulz called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

RHPC Board Roll Call

Dr. Schulz called roll for the Board members in attendance.

Toni Carnie	Tom Munoz
John Fleming	Michael Rankin
Ray Higgins	Kevin Schulz
Jennifer Kiger	Vicki Tarnow

Approval of Minutes (C101)

Dr. Schulz requested review and approval of the January minutes. Michael Rankin (CHI St. Luke's Health Memorial) made a motion to approve the minutes as written, Vicki Tarnow (Medical Center of Southeast Texas-Port Arthur) seconded the motion, and the coalition members carried the motion. The minutes were approved as written.

New Business

- **Winter Weather Response**

Dr. Schulz opened discussion to the coalition members regarding the recent winter weather response and identified improvements.

1. **Shelters for people showing up in the ERs because they have nowhere else to go. Need sheltering for general population as well as medical/special needs sheltering.**

Mark Sloan reported the Red Cross does not provide congregate sheltering due to COVID. They did not provide sheltering last year or during hurricane season. There were an additional 20% additional hotel rooms that the Red Cross obtained access to which became filled almost immediately including hotels almost 100 miles away. Sheltering is an entirely different situation due to COVID. Hospitals need to be prepared that sheltering will be an ongoing issue especially as hospitals become a refuge during incidents (such as Hurricane Harvey, winter storms, etc.) as people will be looking for locations with power-generation and resources.

Lori Upton suggested the hospitals speak with their case workers to find some ways to get generators placed in their homes so they can continue to operate their electrically dependent equipment. Requests are placed early on with the state for resources and for sheltering operations. Due to the weather and the effect across the entire state of Texas, trying to get equipment supplies from personnel down into the area was nearly impossible. This is not an excuse, it is something we are going to need to plan for when a contingency plan does not work, "What are we going to do?"

2. Power Outage

Discussion ensued regarding power outages being a big part of the sheltering issue.

3. Dialysis Centers

There was discussion regarding power and water outages affecting dialysis services.

4. Water Outage/Boil Water Notice

There was discussion about water being hyper-chlorinated or super-chlorinated. Loretta Flynn spoke with public works and they assured her they do not super-chlorinate because that much chlorine in their system would cause damaged pipes. This is much bigger than just the Houston water system and she recommended hospitals and medical facilities know where their water supply areas are located and work with their utility district to provide better notification.

5. EMS

Dr. Schulz stated every EMS agency he spoke with had an unprecedented call volume during this incident. He suggested potentially utilizing mass casualty and surge plans that are in place for other types of events. Ambulances sitting at hospitals for several hours trying to offload is a challenge EMS faces and we need to look at ways to help address this issue going forward. This is no reflection on the ER staff as they were doing everything they could with everything they had.

6. Proactive Communication

The coalition members requested better communication during large-scale events, especially regarding evacuations, transfer of patients, etc.

• COVID Response Update

Lori Upton advised the numbers are starting to decrease but we cannot let our guard down. SETRAC has been directed by the state of Texas to start the reduction in contract staffing. The state is requiring SETRAC to decrease the current staffing visitor at the bedside by 12.5% every week until April 9th, then DSHS will reevaluate. We will continue this process until facilities have 10 or less staff at which point, we will decrease by 10%. Our goal is to get everyone down to 10% regularly decrease if numbers stay down in the single digits. This will take a while as there are over 2,000 staff members in the region. Once everyone gets down to the single digits and the numbers continue to stay down, each facility will be asked to give up one person a week which is nine more weeks. Remember, these nurses are for COVID beds and SETRAC will continue to monitor the curve.

Ms. Upton reported the SETRAC duty officers have been assisting with patient transfers for those individuals having difficulty placing a COVID-positive patient. From mid-December to the end of February there have been over 471 requested replacements with most of those cases now coming up COVID-negative. Due to numbers dropping, regular beds opening, and the request for transfers switching from COVID-positive to negative patients, effective Monday (March 8th), the SETRAC duty officers will no longer be serving as the regional transport center to assist with finding a bed for those COVID-negative patients. Transfer will be following the regular transfer processes going forward.

Healthcare Preparedness Capabilities

• Long Term Care Update (C102)

Hilal Salami reported the group contact by SETRAC continues to rise and we are working on bringing new facilities and agencies as coalition stakeholders and educating them on benefits of the coalition.

There is a marked decrease in COVID cases and outbreaks in Long Term Care Facilities, home health resident population and dialysis centers. PPE distribution continues for both the LTC group (748 facilities and dialysis clinics currently on rotation) and the Home Care group (769 agencies currently on rotation) monthly for each.

Most LTC Facility based organizations have received vaccine allotment to their staff and now going through residents and populations with underlying health conditions.

Home Health and care agency staff vaccine allotment is underway mostly through local health departments. There is continuous coordination and response through recent events with the special populations group.

The After Action Report template for the Winter Storm Weather event has been created and the walkthrough session on how to compile it was completed during group call. Training for completion of the HVA template for new members has been completed. Replayed information for the Winter Weather SETRAC AAR link is forthcoming from the Training and Exercise Team. The 2021 EMResource training schedule for the group will be released next week.

- **Training and Exercise Update (C104)**

Adam Lee reported the Burn AAR has been completed and will be submitted to DSHS for approval. Today is the last day to submit the February Winter Weather AAR and we will begin writing the AAR on Monday. The After Action Conference will be held March 22nd at 9:00 am. Registration information will be sent out next week.

John Wingate reported all requirements for SETRAC to provide Nursing CEs have been completed and SETRAC is now a provider. He gave a brief overview of the CE process and how to submit program information.

SETRAC continues to hold WebEOC/EMResource/EMTrack trainings with the next training scheduled for March 11th at 1:00 pm. Registration can be found under the Education tab à Register for Training à Click on the EMResource/EMTrack/WebEOC button,

The Training and Exercise Team are working to get a date finalized for an ABLIS class. An e-mail will be sent out with registration information. Training will be provided on an “as-need-bases”. To inquire on training availability or set up a training, please email exercise@setrac.org.

- **EMTF Update (C104)**

Mikal Orr reported the Critical Care ASTs have demobilized - Del Rio (January 3 - February 12) Chambers County EMS, and Laredo (December 6 – February 25) Windsor EMS.

AST Activation for 911 Support & Critical Care transfers - Nacogdoches (February 19 – February 24) Lake Jackson EMS, Chambers Co. EMS, Windsor EMS, & Atascocita.

Winter Weather AMBUS missions - (February 14 – February 21) AMBUSs evacuated or transported 68 total patients across five separate missions. One mission was a transport of eleven patients for emergency dialysis.

FED Ambulance Strike Team/2 MIST - (February 21 – February 24) assigned fifteen Ambulance Strike Team to assist in South/South East Texas. Also assigned two MIST personnel from Corpus Christi for leadership and support of the FED AST

Potential Military Plane Crash - MPV 601 & 604 responded to a potential military plane crash in the Big Thicket forest near Woodville. Also responding were Gary Litton & Mikal Orr and all units disregarded due to no incident.

- **Inventory Update**

Jackson Bartlett reported Facilities will be sent their inventory list on file to update their HPP purchased equipment and commodities on hand or change in status prior to in-person inventory. Facilities will also be provided updated procedures and forms for tracking Preparedness inventory and asset disposal request. Reminder that asset disposal forms and HPP transfer of asset forms can be found on the SETRAC website.

Ms. Upton advised, due to many PPE “no shows”, SETRAC will be sending out a survey to find out if the facilities/agencies would prefer to continue receiving the regular monthly push-packs or return to an “as needed” STAR request basis.

Sub-Committee Updates

RHPC Award of Excellence Committee (C101)

No update to report.

Symposium Planning (C101)

Ms. Upton reported the planning committee is meeting on Monday (March 8th). We are working with the Pleasure Pier for the Thursday evening event. Their quote is higher this year than last year, so we are currently working to negotiate. We are also reaching out to other venues for quotes. The “Call for Presentations” and “Save the Dates” will go out next week.

Clinical Advisory Committee (C101)

Tina Rose reported that the Clinical Advisory Committee has been meeting the third Thursday of each month at 9am online, from May until February to compile burn surge information. The Regional Burn Surge Plan includes current regional capacity for the 3 burn centers and recommendations for non-burn healthcare facilities to be prepared to utilize ICU bed capacity for stabilizing burn patients for several days. The plan was tested/validated during the January 28, 2021 Tabletop Exercise (TTX). The final draft of the plan is up for vote during the RHPC meeting on 3/5/2021.

Ms. Rose is leaving her position in the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Initiative (RCPI) on March 5th and will no longer be serving as the Clinical Advisory Committee Chair with the Regional Healthcare Preparedness Coalition. This committee is seeking a new Chair. To participate in this committee, please contact Lisa.Spivey@SETRAC.org. She thanked the coalition members for the opportunity to work with the region.

Regional Plan Summary

These five regional plans have been under review/update in 2020 and continue into Spring/Summer 2021:

1. The Coordination of Multiple Incident Sites (CMIS) Regional Plan has been under edits with the plan owner from October 2020 until February 2021. The Red Team Review meeting to initiate stakeholder involvement was on March 1, 2021 and the first Red Team Review meeting for this document is scheduled for March 29th from 9am-11am (To be involved in this process, please contact Jonathan.Wiggins@HoustonTx.gov).
2. The Regional Burn Surge Plan was created May 2020 – January 2021, exercised in the January 28th Tabletop Exercise (TTX) and voted for release across the region by the Regional Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (RHPC) on March 5, 2021.
3. The Regional Emergency Public Information Plan (EPIP) was under review from 2018-2021 and there is a TTX scheduled for April 7, 2021 (refer to Charity.Dominguez@HoustonTx.gov or Yaneth.Calderon@HoustonTx.gov for more information).
4. HGAC has contractor support for updates to the Regional Interoperable Communication Plan (RIC-P) 2019-2021 (refer to Michael.Lambert@H-GAC.com or Justin.Riley@H-GAC.com for more information).
5. The Texas Medical Center (TMC) pandemic guide was re-written as an all-hazards guidance in February of 2019; however, the TMC EMC was recently replaced, and follow-up is anticipated in 2021 for a projected update status.

Regional Plans Training

The January training had 57 attendees with the following distribution:

Discipline	#	Discipline	#	Discipline	#
Emergency Management	17	Public Health	3	METRO	8
Hospitals/Healthcare	0	Law Enforcement	0	TDEM/DPS	2
VOADs	25	Fire Services	1	Judge	1

The next quarterly training is scheduled for Tuesday, April 20th at 10am. In Tina’s absence, Austen McMillin will conduct the training. For more information about this 1-hour quarterly regional plans webinar, please see attached flyer. Register to attend: <https://houstonuasi.com/regional-training-registration-2021/>.

Continuity Training

The FEMA L/K548 & L/K550 classes are being conducted, on a limited basis, by national teachings virtually until the 1301 and 1302 courses become available under the new course series, which is anticipated to roll out nation-wide Spring/Summer 2021. There is also a new National Certified Continuity Instructor Cadre, as well as other changes to the Continuity Excellence Series Certificate Program (see attached flyer and this link <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/continuity/toolkit> for information). For National Continuity Program (NCP) questions, contact the FEMA Region VI Coordinator (David.Lebesack@FEMA.DHS.GOV). The updated course listings will be:

- IS-1300: Introduction to Continuity of Operations (published online as an independent study in 10/2019 and is a requirement to attend in-person/virtual taught continuity trainings)
- E/L/K 1301 Continuity Planning
- E/L/K 1302 Continuity Program Management

Corridor Updates (C101)

Downtown Corridor – Ray Higgins reported the Downtown Corridor met via “Go To” meeting on Friday, February 5th. Key reports and discussions centered around completion of the HVA, EMResource/EMTrack changes, and capabilities review. The next Downtown Corridor meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 9th.

South Corridor – Jeremy Way stated there was a great response from all corridors to the recent MCI Cy-Fair bus incident. One of the lessons learned was the importance of redundant communications; how to operate them and how to use them. Good collaborations from all the stakeholders as well as the county judges, law enforcement, fire departments, EMS, and hospitals. The next South Corridor meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 12th.

East Corridor – Vicki Tarnow reported the East Corridor met on Friday, January 15th, with discussions regarding the ongoing COVID response. The next East Corridor meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 19th.

North Corridor – Gary Litton reported the North Corridor met on Wednesday, February 10th. He is hoping to eventually move to in-person meetings for discussions regarding the winter storm, issues in the region, as well as COVID response. The next North Corridor meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 14th.

West Corridor – Toni Carnie reported the West Corridor radio check is back up over 50% for March. The next West Corridor meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 25th.

Partner Updates (C101)

DSHS Region 6/5 South – Bobbiejean Garcia reported public health is full-on into the vaccination process. Vaccine providers are encouraged to attend the weekly information call on Tuesday is at 11:00 am. A health advisory was sent out yesterday for Ebola to let people know there are two Ebola outbreaks; one in Guinea and the other in the Republic of Congo. She encouraged the facilities/agencies to ensure their Ebola plans and procedures are relevant and valid.

Harris County Public Health – Jennifer Kiger reported vaccinations are a huge component in the cities. There are 6,000 Pfizer vaccines going out per day and they received the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine this week. There are 12,000 J&J vaccines to distribute within the next two weeks. All the vaccine mobile sites will be given J&J vaccines on Monday and they will give out up to 15,000 vaccines at each site with those sites rotating across the county to address any type of barriers for our community/residents. She also reported the teachers have been included in the priority groups. They have already given out approximately 11,000 vaccines to teachers that were in the first announcement and are now including them in their push. They pushed out 80,000 vaccine invitations for appointments with many of those going to teachers.

Harris County Public Health is trying to see how they can increase their test demand. They have about six mobile test sites and three stationery test sites and the demand has gone down quite significantly since the holidays. They have had a lot of

people tell them they received their first vaccine with a provider or hospital and, for some reason, are unable to get the second vaccine with the same provider or hospital. They are working through the issue with the state to get this resolved.

City of Houston Public Health – John Fleming reported their health centers are taking vaccine appointments. They are looking to open-up a couple more drive-throughs very soon. They have secured a couple of airport parking lots as well. They are working to get partners lined up so they can do vaccinations for those who are truly homebound and have no transportation to get to a clinic site.

The City of Houston Public Health Department is interested in the variants that are circulating developed genomic sequencing capacity at their labs. There are a lot of drivers for that including some direction from the CDC. They are looking forward to seeing much enhanced capacity, not just in their labs but across the other labs in the area that are conducting testing and now genomic sequencing as well.

As part of the winter storm event, the question was raised “How do we get medical oxygen distributed during these events?”. This seems to be a routine problem, although not an enormous problem in terms of number of people affected, it is something we want to make sure a robust plan is in place to be able to resolve for the next event. Now is the time to pull in all the gaps as we head into hurricane season.

Texas City OEM – Tom Munoz reported they continue to deal with the effects from the ice storm. They are continuing with test sites and a total of 28 test data completed with approximately 3,500 people. They are watching the numbers carefully, paying attention to the governor’s orders but still marching forward.

Harris County OEM – Mr. Sloan reported March is the one-year anniversary of activating the Operations Center for COVID. During the COVID activation, there have been twenty additional activations for a variety of incidents (including homeland security related mass gatherings, weather events, winter weather storm which brought ice and other problems with it). This winter event was the 48th presidentially declared disaster in Harris County since 1979. As the county moves forward, some concerns are the 100% re-opening of Texas as that will bring mass gatherings (sporting events, festivals, carnivals, etc.) which will create new opportunities for security protocols. Harris County OEM continues to focus on COVID and getting to the end, hopefully by Christmas. Each single event has created a new opportunity for us to learn and try to mitigate potential issues.

FBI – Ms. Upton reported the coalition members that Joel Holmes advised SETRAC that there is a third party out there selling vaccine appointments to international residents. It looks like they are spoofing an appointment reminder that goes back to the people after they have paid for their vaccine or appointment and they do not tell them where to go for their vaccine. When the people contact the call center, they are told they are having trouble with other locations and they need to go to hospital “X” which is not a valid location/appointment. She asked the hospitals to contact her at lori.upton@setrac.org if they see this going on in their facilities so she can get the information to Mr. Holmes.

Open Discussion/Other

In-Person Meetings

Lisa Spivey asked the coalition members if they were interested in resuming “in-person” meetings. The coalition members agreed to continue virtual meetings for now and revisit this agenda item later. Ms. Spivey advised she will add the item to each corridor agenda to get their feedback regarding corridor meetings.

Burn Surge Plan

Dr. Schulz requested approval of the Burn Surge Plan. Ms. Carnie made a motion to approve the Burn Surge Plan as written, Mr. Sloan seconded the motion, and with no coalition members opposed, the Burn Surge Plan was approved as written and distributed.

Emergency Public and Information Monitoring Plan Tabletop

Ms. Rose advised there is a web-based Emergency Public and Information Monitoring Plan tabletop scheduled for April 7th.

Adjourn

There being no further business or discussion, Dr. Schulz adjourned the meeting at 2:47 pm. The next RHPC Board meeting is scheduled for Friday (May 7th) from 1:30 to 3:30 pm via virtual meeting.

Attendees

Kevin Schulz, Toni Carnie, Leobardo Alfaro, Delba Barrios, Jason Baumgarten, Matthew Berkheiser, Kiska Boyd, Bethany Brown, Jim Bunch, Stuart Butler, Amanda Carruth, Jonathan Castaneda, Guy Bertho Cayo, Angela Cone, Lesa Cordova, Cynthia Crespo-Bonaparte, Justin Cude, Dena Daniel, Eunice Davis, Matthew Diaz, John Fleming, Bernard Flores, Loretta Flynn, John Franks, Elizabeth Frederick, Fanny Frederick, Aaron Freedkin, Bobbiejean Garcia, LaShonda Giddins, Mary Ann Hajovsky, Matthew Hall, Kyle Hamilton, Richard Herrera, Ray Higgins, Santonio Hoke, Jonathan House, Kevin Hunt, Superior Johnson, Adrienne Joseph, Jennifer Kiger, Douglas Kingsbury, Gloria Kologinczak, Gabe Lavine, Amy Lopez, Henry Maniego, Patrick McCabe, Mac McClendon, Austen McMillin, Robert Meler, Elizabeth Michel, Tom Munoz, Mitchell Nawojczyk, Michael Olivier, Devina Patel, Jesse Pedroza, Jody Randall, Michael Rankin, Anthony Robinson, Elizabeth Rothrock, Kacy Sammons, Tammy Sanderson, Vicki Tarnow, Ashlee Thurman, Annette Trevino, Sandra Tti, Joshua Vaught, Aaron Velasquez, Thomas Wilbur, Lori Upton, Lisa Spivey, Jackson Bartlett, Adam Lee, John Wingate, Donald Morrison, Hilal Salami, Mikal Orr, Roxie Ward