



NDMS Tabletop Exercise After Action Report (AAR) /Improvement Plan (IP)

July 2021

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EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	NDMS Hurricane Tabletop Exercise
Exercise Dates	7/21/2021
Scope	This is a Tabletop exercise, planned for two and a half hours with the local, state, and federal partners. Exercise play is limited to identified stakeholders who play a role in preparation and execution of the NDMS for the Houston as a receiving area
Purpose	The purpose of this exercise is to socialize and validate the NDMS plan in the event of a major hurricane affecting the upper gulf coast.
HPP Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability 2 Health Care and Medical Response Coordination • Capability 4 Medical Surge
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure timely and accurate messaging / alerts are provided to the correct stakeholders. • Assess the process for the activation of the NDMS to include understanding the approval process. • Identify roles and responsibilities for patient tracking. • Discuss the roles and responsibilities for evacuee transportation, reception, sheltering, and repatriation
Threat or Hazard	Major Hurricane
Scenario	A rapidly developed category 5 hurricane made landfall in Gulfport, Mississippi and continued a track westward across New Orleans, Louisiana, before turning sharply to the Northeast. The system is currently 83 miles north of Birmingham, Alabama. Catastrophic damage has been reported to the upper gulf coast to include the medical infrastructure. The Governors of Louisiana and Mississippi have requested the activation of the NDMS.
Sponsor	Southeast Texas Regional Advisory Council (SETRAC) Regional Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (RHPC), Assistant Secretary of Preparedness and Response (ASPR).
Participating Organizations	Multiple Organizations. A complete list is included in Appendix B.
Point of Contact	Adam Lee and John Wingate Regional Training and Exercise Coordinator 1111 North Loop West Suite #160 Houston, TX. 77439 exercise@setrac.org

SCENARIO OVERVIEW

Scenario

Major Hurricane

A rapidly developed category 5 hurricane made landfall in Gulfport, Mississippi and continued a track westward across New Orleans, Louisiana, before turning sharply to the Northeast. The system is currently 83 miles north of Birmingham, Alabama. Catastrophic damage has been reported to the upper gulf coast to include the medical infrastructure. The Governors of Louisiana and Mississippi have requested the activation of the NDMS.

ANALYSIS OF CORE CAPABILITIES

Aligning exercise objectives and core capabilities provides a consistent taxonomy for evaluation that transcends individual exercises to support preparedness reporting and trend analysis. Table 1 includes the exercise objectives, aligned core capabilities, and performance ratings for each core capability as observed during the exercise and determined by the evaluation team.

Objective	HPP Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
Ensure timely and accurate messaging / alerts are provided to the correct stakeholders	Health Care and Medical Response Coordination		X		
Assess the process for the activation of the NDMS to include understanding the approval process.	Health Care and Medical Response Coordination		X		
Identify roles and responsibilities for patient tracking.	Medical Surge		X		
Discuss the roles and responsibilities for evacuee transportation, reception, sheltering, and repatriation	Health Care and Medical Response Coordination		X		

Table 1. Summary of Core Capability Performance

Ratings Definitions:

Performed without Challenges (P): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.

Performed with Some Challenges (S): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified.

Performed with Major Challenges (M): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s), but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other activities; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.

Unable to be Performed (U): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were not performed in a manner that achieved the objective(s).

The following sections provide an overview of the performance related to each exercise objective and associated core capability, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Ensure timely and accurate messaging / alerts are provided to the correct stakeholders.

The strengths and areas for improvement for each core capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

HPP Capability 2: Health Care and Medical Response Coordination

Strengths

The *partial* capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Development of relationships and lines of communication, prior to a real-world event.

Strength 2: Processes established in the Federal Coordination Center (FCC) guidelines.

Areas for Improvement:

The following areas require improvement to achieve the *full* capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Update the NDMS plan to reflect all relevant partners who assist in the alert and messaging phase of an NDMS Activation.

Analysis: The process was understood and agreed upon, but the VA identified roles of agencies/organizations who were not listed in the plan.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Assess the process for the activation of the NDMS to include understanding the approval process.

The strengths and areas for improvement for each core capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

HPP Capability 2: Health Care and Medical Response Coordination

Strengths

The *partial* capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Federal, State, and Local partners participate and offered their individual perspectives for the approval of an NDMS activation.

Strength 2: The re-imburement process was clearly understood by all participating agencies.

Areas for Improvement:

The following areas require improvement to achieve the *full* capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Update the NDMS plan to reflect all relevant partners who assist in the alert and messaging phase of an NDMS Activation.

Analysis: The process was understood and agreed upon, but the roles of the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) and DSHS need to be more defined in the plan.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Identify roles and responsibilities for patient tracking.

The strengths and areas for improvement for each core capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

HPP Capability 4 Medical Surge Strengths

The *partial* capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: The platforms and process for patient tracking were identified.

Areas for Improvement:

The following areas require improvement to achieve the *full* capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Update the NDMS plan to reflect all relevant partners who assist in Patient Tracking during an NDMS Activation.

Analysis: The process was understood and agreed upon, but the VA identified roles of agencies/organizations who were not listed in the plan.

Area for Improvement 2: Conduct an annual NDMS exercise with all identified partners in the plan.

Analysis: All partners agreed that this exercise was beneficial and should be conducted on an annual basis to validate and socialize the plan.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Discuss the roles and responsibilities for evacuee transportation, reception, sheltering, and repatriation

The strengths and areas for improvement for each core capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

HPP Capability 2: Health Care and Medical Response Coordination

Strengths

The *partial* capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: The process used for patient triage and tracking was clearly identified.

Areas for Improvement:

The following areas require improvement to achieve the *full* capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Update the NDMS plan to reflect all relevant partners who assist in evacuee transportation, reception, sheltering and repatriation phase of an NDMS Activation.

Analysis: The process was understood and agreed upon, but the identified roles of agencies/organizations need to be clearly defined in the plan.

Appendix A: REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This IP has been developed as a result of NDMS Exercise conducted on July 21, 2021

Objective	HPP Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Start Date	Completion Date
Objective 1: Ensure timely and accurate messaging / alerts are provided to the correct stakeholders.	HPP Capability 2:	Update the NDMS plan to reflect all relevant partners who assist in the alert and messaging phase of an NDMS Activation.	Update the NDMS plan.	Michael E. Debakey VA	July 26, 2021	January 31, 2022
Objective 2: Assess the process for the activation of the NDMS to include understanding the approval process.	HPP Capability 2:	Update the NDMS plan to reflect all relevant partners who assist in the alert and messaging phase of an NDMS Activation.	Update the NDMS plan.	Michael E. Debakey VA	July 26, 2021	January 31, 2022
Objective 3: Identify roles and responsibilities for patient tracking.	HPP Capability 2:	Update the NDMS plan to reflect all relevant partners who assist in Patient Tracking during an NDMS Activation.	Update the NDMS plan	Michael E. Debakey VA	July 26, 2021	January 31, 2022
		Conduct an annual NDMS exercise with all identified partners in the plan.	Coordinate and schedule annual exercises to validate the plan.	Michael E. Debakey VA	July 26, 2021	Annually
Objective 4: Discuss the roles and responsibilities for evacuee transportation, reception, sheltering, and repatriation.	HPP Capability 2:	Update the NDMS plan to reflect all relevant partners who assist in evacuee transportation, reception, sheltering and repatriation phase of an NDMS Activation.	Update the NDMS plan	Michael E. Debakey VA	July 26, 2021	Update the NDMS plan

Appendix B: EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

Agency Name
ASPR
City of Houston
Fort Bend County EMS
Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
HHS
Houston Fire Department
Houston Office of Emergency Management
Houston Police Department
Michael E. DeBakey VA Med Center
SETRAC
Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)
Texas Division of Emergency Management

Total exercise participants - 24