LICENSED INDEPENDENT PRACTITIONERS (LIPs) RESPONSIBILITIES IN DISASTER

Background

Providence Health & Services in the Portland Service Area has taken a progressive position on emergency management by employing a team of full-time emergency management professionals to lead disaster planning, training, and response activities using the most current concepts and strategies in the field. Currently, this team is seeking to improve awareness and involvement of licensed independent practitioners in emergency planning and exercise activities, as required by The Joint Commission.

The tragic events of the Boston Marathon Bombing clearly demonstrated the necessity of mass medical care at local hospitals. Historically hospitals and healthcare delivery systems have been ill-prepared in response to mass casualty incidents. In recent years, however, they have increased planning efforts and training to respond effectively during disasters. Additionally, measures to improve preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery capabilities were codified in federal law and enforced by agencies such as Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Department of Homeland Security.

Physician leadership was intimately engaged in the October 2014 Ebola planning, and subsequent response to a suspected Ebola patient that was admitted to the Providence Milwaukie Enhanced Precautions unit. Physicians were integrated in to the Hospital Command Center team and lead the care team through a precarious 4 days of caring for the patient. Having the full engagement of our dedicated physicians and their integration in preparedness, planning, and response activities, the patient received the care and personal support that was needed and Providence shined as a model for other hospitals in the state as they prepared to handle an Ebola patient. Physician leadership has also been engaged in planning and responding to Inclement Weather emergencies every fall and winter.

What You Need to Know

As members of the Providence team, it is crucial for you to understand your role in response to a disaster and how you fit into the Hospital Command Center structure.

Being prepared is the best first step for disaster response. In order to prepare you to serve our community members in the event of a disaster involving mass casualties, pandemic or severe weather events, each LIP should:

1. Be familiar with the hospital’s Emergency Operations Plan
2. Keep hospital I.D. badge and driver’s license accessible
3. Know where to access situational information
   a. Call the Providence Emergency Hotline at 1-855-396-6252
   b. Communicate within your group or department
4. Be flexible, as normal practices may need to be expedited or modified during catastrophic incidents.
5. Understand that altered standards of care may be justified; this directive will be issued only from the Hospital Command Center with advisement from regional leadership.
6. As an optional preparedness measure, consider registering with the federal Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) or the State Emergency Registry of Volunteers in Oregon (SERV-OR), which use a secure database to register, credential, and alert volunteer health providers. For more information visit https://SERV-OR.org.

What to Do in a Disaster

In the event of a disaster, LIPs not on-site at their workplace should call the Providence Emergency Hotline, 1-855-396-6252, for information. If required, report to your respective medical center and check in with the Labor Pool to receive an assignment. Do not report directly to the Emergency Department to help as they will be inundated with triaging critical patients. If the Labor Pool has not yet been established, report to your normal chain of command or the Nursing House Supervisor to receive an assignment. For proper resource tracking and allocation, this step is vital.
As part of your assignment, you should be informed of whom you will report to in the Hospital Command structure. The organizational structure of a Hospital Command Center is flexible and can be rearranged and/or scaled up or down in relation to the actual or expected impact given current hospital resources. Figure 1-1 below is an abbreviated model of a Hospital Command Center organizational chart. LIPs would report to the Medical Care Branch Director under the Operations Section bordered in red.

The Emergency Management team is engaging with physician leadership in multiple venues to foster consistent physician involvement in the Emergency Management program across the Oregon Region. If you have questions, please contact a member of the Emergency Management team.

**Providence Oregon Region Emergency Management Staff:**

Oregon Region:  Mike Kubler, Emergency Management Director  
Oregon Region:  Scott Clementson, Emergency Management Manager  
Oregon Region:  Meghan O'Connell, Emergency Management Manager  
Oregon Region:  Kevin Dunkeson, Sleep Lab Manager/EM Manager  
PMMC:  Patrick Rochon, Injury Prevention Coordinator/EM Coordinator  
PSH:  Billie Grigoraitis, Nursing Hospital Supervisor Lead/EM Coordinator