Medical Reserve Corps
The Who and Where and Why You Need Them

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MRC
The What (is it)
MRC

The What (is it)

• National network of volunteers, organized locally to improve the health and safety of their community

• Started as a demonstration project by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) following 9/11
In 2006, the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act formally established the Medical Reserve Corps “to provide for an adequate supply of volunteers in the case of a Federal, state, local, or tribal public health emergency”
The What (is it)

- Nationally housed in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response
- No federal funding specific to the MRC
The What (is it)

- TX currently reports **31** MRC units primarily housed in LHDs, representing **20,000** volunteers

- DSHS provided $5k per MRC unit in FY 19
The What (is it)

• No two MRC units are the same

• Specific engagement activities vary by community need, volunteer skills, and interest

• Specialty MRC – TX Veterinary MRC
The Who

(are they)
The Who
(are they)

- Key word “medical” volunteers
- Largest profession represented - Nursing
- Non-medical support staff – almost double the number of nurses
The Who (are they)
The Where

(are they)
The Where (are they)

Housing units

- Primarily LHDs
- Regional Advisory Council (El Paso)
- TX Veterinary MRC - 501(c)3 (previously TX A&M)
- University of TX at Austin School of Nursing
- Jr. MRC – high schools
The Where (are they)

Unit leaders

• Generally paid employees

• Multiple hats – Strategic National Stockpile Coordinator

• MRC member engagement – key to success
The Where (are they)

Texas MRC Highlights – Fiscal Year 2019

- 31 MRC units
- 20,000 volunteers
- 39,150 volunteer hours
- 507 activities
- 6 emergency responses

All data from Fiscal Year 2019: October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019
The Why

(you need them)
The Why
(you need them)

When something goes **BOOM**
When something gets **WET**
When something gets **INFECTED**

And anything in between
The Why (you need them)

Surge staff & Workforce multipliers
The Why (you need them)

- Natural Disasters: 68%
- Infectious Disease Outbreaks: 28%
- Human Induced / Civil Hazards: 12%
- Technological Hazards: 4%
- Foodborne Illness: 3%
- Hazardous Materials Spills: 3%
- Other Emergencies: 17%

Source: 2017 MRC Network Profile
The Why (you need them)

- Community engagement – health education, health screening clinics, call center support
- Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER)
- Point of distribution – flu clinics, medical countermeasures, other
- Extra hands in the office
The Why
(you need them)

2019 Texas MRC Highlights
The Why
(you need them)

Montgomery County MRC (Conroe, TX)

Deployed to two shelters to assist with the medical needs of displaced residents following severe tropical storm flooding
The Why
(you need them)

Collin County MRC (McKinney, TX)

Activated to assist with patient interviews during a large-scale disease outbreak investigation
The Why
(you need them)

Fort Bend County MRC (Rosenberg, TX)

Operated a call center in preparation for hurricane season, contacting local residents to determine the need for assistance in the event of an area evacuation.
The Why
(you need them)

Brazoria County MRC (Alvin, TX)

Established and staffed a shelter site for residents in response to Brazos River flooding
Denton County MRC (Denton, TX)

Participated in training on emergency response to domestic biological incidents, learning appropriate response actions, and containment measures
The Why (you need them)

Alamo Area MRC (San Antonio, TX)

340 volunteers, including MDs, PAs, NPs, RNs and LVNs, assisted migrant clinic operations in San Antonio providing health screening/triage and health education for individuals traveling through San Antonio on their way to sponsors across the country.
The Why
(you need them)

Volunteer Hours have worth
Roughly $25/hr

And can be used for match

(for specific information contact your DSHS contract manager)
The How
(to get started)
The How (to get started)

• Meeting with HHS Region VI MRC Coordinator and State Coordinator to discuss plans - Mission, Activation Triggers, Housing Organization, and Coordination details

• Work on undeveloped items from the planning meeting

• Follow up meeting with HHS Region VI MRC Coordinator
The How (to get started)

- Complete paper application
- Complete online application
- Interview with Regional Liaison from outside of region
The How (to get started)

• Application package goes to the MRC Director (ASPR) for final decision

• Process generally takes about 6 to 8 weeks

• For more information visit MRC.hhs.gov
Final Thought

TALON Regional Conference
June 16-19, 2020
Norris Conference Center
Houston, TX
Thank you

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