



Public Health
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Idaho Public Health Districts

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December 2015

PREPARING FOR FEDERAL MEDICAL STATIONS IN IDAHO

In October, Idaho's public health districts were given the opportunity to participate in trainings and site visits with federal partners to evaluate the functionality of proposed Federal Medical Station (FMS) sites across the state. Captain John Smart and Jerry Hill, both from the US. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), visited with preparedness teams from most health districts to discuss the practicality of the different sites. Additional visits are scheduled this month and in March 2016 to provide training and site visits in remaining regions.

The FMS program is designed to supplement local medical shelter capacity by providing non-acute medical care to individuals who are displaced during a disaster and who have medical needs that cannot be met in a general population shelter. Deployment of a FMS can be requested through the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security by an impacted county after consultation with state and local public health. The level of care that is provided by a FMS is equivalent to the care offered by a nursing home. To ensure the needs for this level of care, the FMS is prepackaged with two options for deployment. The first option is a 50 bed package that is targeted for smaller shelters and requires 15,000 square feet to deploy. The second is a 250 bed option that is designed for a larger need and requires 40,000 square feet to be properly deployed. The time required to deliver and deploy the FMS takes approximately 60 hours before it is capable of accepting patients.

Idaho's public health districts were tasked with identifying functional locations and securing agreements with facility owners for their use. The purpose of the site visits was to evaluate the functionality of the facilities and capability to provide support services. A FMS includes all the medical supplies needed to care for patients in the shelter, but do not include staff or support services. To properly host a FMS, the location needs to have the ability to be self-contained for patients and staff on site (restrooms, showers, cooking facilities, etc.). The resources needed to support a FMS include everything from backup power, to having areas for securely storing pharmaceuticals. Obtaining all the required services and re-

quirements for maintaining a state of readiness is a labor intensive process. Federal partners were looking to see if the sites chosen by local preparedness groups had the capacity to support patients at the shelters. They also were identifying needs that remain unmet for the various locations. They are currently compiling feedback for the public health districts' chosen sites so that modifications and improvements can be made in order to best serve the residents of Idaho during a disaster situation.

Federal partners were impressed with the level of community partner involvement from the local healthcare coalitions.

While the final feedback has not been provided to the public health districts, we did receive some immediate feedback from Federal Partners during the site visits. They were impressed with the level of community involvement from the healthcare coalitions and the highly functional locations health districts have been able to secure as sites. Health District Preparedness Teams throughout the State are eagerly awaiting final feedback to ensure that Idaho maintains the highest level of preparedness and stands ready to ensure the highest standards of public health.



HEALTHY PEOPLE IN HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

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