

Oceanview Nursing & Rehabilitation Center

Far Rockaway, NY

Disaster Base Plan

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NYU SCHOOL OF GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH

FALL 2021 MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH DISASTERS

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Table of Contents

Preface.....	2
Signature page.....	3
Mission Statement.....	4
Statement of purpose.....	4
Authorities.....	4
Communication Plans.....	5
Mutual Aid Agreement.....	5
Concept of Operation.....	6
Community Needs Assessment.....	6
Matching Available Resources.....	7
Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Disaster Response.....	7
Annex 2.....	9
Annex 3.....	11
References.....	13

Preface

Oceanview Nursing Home was established in 1969 and offers several services to older adults such as assistance with daily living activities, mental and physical rehabilitation, chronic healthcare needs, and skilled nursing care. The facility amenities include sub-acute care, short and long term rehabilitation care, a specialized wound care program, tracheostomy/respiratory care, hospice care, and memory care services for patients with dementia.

The nursing home is located in Far Rockaway, New York in close proximity to Rockaway Beach, thus making it vulnerable to natural disasters such as hurricanes and flooding. Other potential disasters that are a threat to the facility include earthquakes, fires, civil unrest and terrorism.

This plan takes into consideration the condition of the nursing home patients who are mostly elderly and frail and in need of assistance during disasters. We will assess the various threats and hazards of the facility and develop a plan for managing the nursing home before, during and after a disaster. In addition to this, we will describe the methods we would adopt in evacuating patients out of the facility if the need occurs, while ensuring patients are given quality care.

Signature Page

We, the undersigned, agree with the scope of the plan and agree to the guidelines and recommendations set forth.

Oceanview Nursing & Rehabilitation Center

Facility Administrator _____ Date _____

Corporate Representative _____ Date _____

Oceanview Department of Emergency Services _____ Date _____

NYS Department of Health

Deputy Commissioner _____ Date _____

NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Deputy Commissioner _____ Date _____

NYC Office of Emergency Management

Director, Community Emergency Response _____ Date _____

Mission Statement

At Oceanview, we provide complete healthcare facilities for our older adult residents ensuring their acute comfort & well-being. We aim to provide not only a healthy place to reside but also an active lifestyle with all the love and attention that maximizes happiness and content for our residents who count on us.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this operations plan is to provide recommendations to protect the elderly residents of Oceanview Nursing and Rehabilitation Center during the event of a natural or manmade disaster. This plan will serve as a guide to evacuate and relocate patients thereby reducing the number of injuries and lives lost during an emergency. This document will provide the framework for various communication and coordination efforts between the NYS Department of Health and Oceanview Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

Authorities

1. New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH)
2. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC DOHMH)
3. NYC Regional Emergency Management Services Council (NYC REMSC)
4. NYC Office of Emergency Management (NYC OEM)
5. American Red Cross Greater New York Region
6. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
7. US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Communications

Prior to a forecasted natural disaster such as a hurricane, the NYS Department of Health and/or NYC Emergency Management will communicate with Oceanview Nursing and Rehabilitation Center who will then contact local ambulance companies to dispatch emergency vehicles to transport residents to hotels in safe zones. All organizations will work together to provide a safe mode of transportation to bring residents to designated receiving nursing homes (or hotels as backup) located away from flood zones. During an unpredictable disaster such as a fire, local emergency first responders such as FDNY Paramedics and EMTs will be dispatched to provide first aid and transportation for those injured. Emergency responders will then communicate with local hospitals to notify them of the disaster and prepare them for a potential mass triage incident. Communication will also be made to designated receiving nursing homes and volunteer nursing staff on standby who will care for residents that are relocated to hotels.

Mutual Aid Agreement

Oceanview is a small private nursing home that may not have all of the necessary resources to evacuate patients. A mutual aid agreement should be signed with local ambulance and ambulance companies such as Senior Care and RCA. These companies will aid with the evacuation of patients to other nursing homes, hotels and hospitals as needed. A mutual aid agreement should also be created with the hotels that have agreed to house patients after they have been evacuated. There should be an adequate food supply available for the duration of their stay. The NYS Department of Health should also dispatch representatives to evaluate the living and safety conditions of patients who have been evacuated.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Oceanview Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The nursing home community includes the elderly who may have special medical needs and require special support based on their physical or mental conditions. Hence, it is important to understand how these needs affect disaster preparedness and response. Many times, the lack of attention to these needs during a major emergency or disaster as well as a lack of support may be as detrimental as the disaster itself. Key medical needs assessment of nursing home residents includes an assessment of various health conditions and disabilities related to vision, hearing loss, mobility, and mental health conditions such as dementia. Nursing home residents with these conditions may be at greater risk than other nursing homes patients; i.e., they may be even more vulnerable during a disaster event. Their inability to function independently (or to require assistive devices) and for some of them, difficulty in comprehending what is happening and what is needed to respond to a disaster or emergency situation, can heighten their risk of disaster-related adverse outcomes. In addition to this, several nursing home residents need special support such as a wheelchair, oxygen, and other vital medical assistance during the evacuation process and later at the shelter, and these supports may not be readily available.

The location of Oceanview Nursing Home in Far Rockaway, NY makes it susceptible to myriad threats and hazards. These include hurricanes, flooding, earthquakes, fires, active shooters, disease outbreaks (e.g., COVID-19), civil unrest, tornados and widespread lasting power outages caused by ice storms.¹ As a result, nursing home emergency preparedness is of key importance, particularly given the high mortality rate within long-term facilities associated with hurricanes and diseases such as COVID-19.² Some challenges faced by nursing homes in the aftermath of emergencies or disasters include inadequate transportation for evacuation, communication systems failure, power failure, water outage, food shortage, shortage of generator fuel and oxygen or other medical gases, shortages of medications and other medical and general supplies.¹ In addition, nursing homes tend to have staff shortages during emergencies and disasters and this might severely affect the quality of care and services provided to residents. Compounding the problem, federal, state, and local response agencies do not provide sufficient aid and supplies to nursing homes during disasters in comparison to hospitals, despite the fact that nursing homes also provide vital medical care that requires uninterrupted power supplies and other essential supplies. The absence of these critical supplies and normal functioning of the facility can severely

compromise the health and safety and well-being of the nursing home residents and can lead to rapid deterioration of health and even death.³

MATCHING AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO NEEDS

The importance of incorporating the needs of nursing homes in emergency and disaster planning cannot be overemphasized. There is a need for federal and state agencies to provide support and resources to nursing homes in order to ensure that core functions of the nursing homes are maintained during any emergency or disaster. Stockpiling of food, generators, water, medication, vital medical supplies, oxygen, batteries and personal hygiene products dedicated for emergency or disaster events is required. Backup generators and batteries need to be available for electrical medical devices and communication devices to prevent a total shutdown of communication. This is essential to maintain communication with command centers, local law authorities and other bodies involved in emergency and disaster control.

There is a need to take into consideration residents' physical and mental conditions during evacuation. Adequate provision of special support should be made for the evacuation of residents confined to wheelchairs as well as those with dementia or mental challenges in the event of an emergency or disaster.³ Recruitment of nursing home staff should be an ongoing activity and back up care should be identified well in advance so that staff are available to meet surge capacity needs. Contracts with staffing agencies should be in place in order to address staff shortages, which are common in nursing homes during emergencies and disasters. Furthermore, back up contracts for ambulances and other means of evacuation should be in place to provide assistance during crises.

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DISASTER RESPONSE

Officials should use several indicators to assess the efficacy of the evacuation efforts. Data related to the number of hospitalizations and or/deaths that occur during the disaster and subsequent evacuation should be collected and recorded. This provides insight into how many individuals were harmed as a result of the natural disaster and/or evacuation. Nursing home residents should be interviewed in order to collect qualitative data that highlights their opinion on the evacuation procedures.

After the evacuation, representatives from the department of health should be deployed to conduct assessments and to examine the experiences and living conditions within the temporary housing facilities. Volunteer physicians and nurses should be available to monitor and examine

patients while they are in temporary housing units. Moreover, assessments can be distributed among healthcare workers and volunteers to determine how well they believe the evacuation was executed.

ANNEX 2

Natural	Technological	Human-caused
Resulting from acts of nature	Involves accidents or the failures of systems and structures	Caused by the intentional actions of an adversary
<p>Hurricane: Oceanview Nursing home is in close proximity to Far Rockaway Beach, as a result, the threat of hurricane is high.</p> <p>Flooding: Flooding due to storms and hurricane poses a threat in this area.</p> <p>Earthquakes: Although only one earthquake of magnitude 3.1 has been recorded recently in this area, this area is still on alert for the threat of earthquake. The USGS database shows that there is a 3.33% chance of a major earthquake within 50km of Far Rockaway, within the next 50 years.</p>	<p>Fire outbreak: The risk of fire outbreak is high in this area. Many residents utilize oxygen tanks and other appliances that can result in fires.</p> <p>Utility Disruption: Power outages due to aftermath of storms and hurricane poses a threat to this nursing home. This could lead to loss of communication and hinder the use of technology that can be beneficial in accessing information.</p>	<p>Active shooters: The risk of active shooters is high in the United States as a result, it poses a real threat in the Nursing home.</p> <p>Civil Unrest: The threat of civil unrest within the neighborhood is likely and is considered as a threat in the nursing home.</p>

<p>Epidemic/Pandemic: The nursing home is situated in New York city which is highly populated. Hence, the risk for epidemics is very high in this area.</p> <p>Tornado: The location of the nursing home in Far Rockaway makes it vulnerable to tornados.</p>		
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ANNEX 3

Training Seminar Title: Nursing Home Evacuation Plan	
Objectives of your Training Seminar (What mitigation strategy are you advocating?)	Nursing home disaster evacuation
Estimate Length of Training	1 hour
Target Audience and max size of audience.	Nursing home staff (including administrators, physicians, nurses, nursing assistants), healthcare volunteers, first responders (including EMS and transporters), temporary housing staff (hotel workers, etc.)
Who would be a good candidate (e.g., structural engineer, health dept. official, first responder?) as Facilitator of this session? Why?	NYS Department of Health official
What do you want community members to do as a result of their attending this session?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be aware of the need for nursing home emergency preparedness plans 2. Be able to assist with evacuating nursing home residents as needed 3. Become familiar with the evacuation plans and recommendations

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Learn how to collaborate to conduct a smooth evacuation drill 5. Be aware of designated evacuation locations, policies, and protocols to ensure patient safety
<p>Strategies to increase community uptake of your mitigation (We have lots of useful links for checklists on the Course Home page under the Important Links page.)</p> <p>List the ones you think might be useful (in the appropriate language) or provide a title or two of a list or handout that you think would be good to give out to attendees.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on community engagement 2. Provide annual training sessions on swift action during disasters 3. Provide brochures on different methods that can be used in evacuating residents during emergencies

References

1. Ladička SB, Ladička JN, Xirasagar S, Cornman CB, Davis CB, Richter JV. Providing shelter to nursing home evacuees in disasters: lessons from Hurricane Katrina. *Am J Public Health*. Jul 2008;98(7):1288-93. doi:10.2105/ajph.2006.107748
2. Weisman, J., 2021. *When disasters strike, nursing home residents face considerable risk*. [online] Brown University. Available at: <<https://www.brown.edu/news/2020-10-06/disasters>> [Accessed 29 November 2021].
3. Khimm, S. and Strickler, L., 2021. *U.S. scrutinizes nursing home evacuation rules after Hurricane Ida deaths*. [online] NBC News. Available at: <<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/u-s-scrutinizes-nursing-home-evacuation-rules-after-hurricane-ida-n1280492>> [Accessed 29 November 2021].