



# Albany County Medical Reserve Corp Volunteer Newsletter

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The Albany County Department of Health's Medical Reserve Corp Volunteer Newsletter is designed to keep our volunteers informed about Albany County's emergency preparedness efforts, volunteer training opportunities, and pertinent emergency preparedness news.

## Drive Thru Vaccine Drill A Success

On Wednesday, November 28, 2007 the Albany County Department of Health collaborated with the Town of Colonie to host the first Capital Region drive thru influenza clinic. More than 150 Town of Colonie municipal employees and their families were pre-registered to receive flu shots at this drill. Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) volunteers played an integral role in making this drill a success.



County Executive Michael Breslin gets vaccinated.

Based on initial evaluation results, it took an average of seven minutes per car to complete the drive-thru process. In a real event, this time saving process could help expedite the vaccination or medication distribution process.



This drill provided an excellent real life opportunity to test the drive thru process and identified a number of important issues that can help us improve future drive thru clinics.

This event also provided an excellent opportunity for us to promote the Albany County Medical Reserve Corp. Each car received an MRC recruitment brochure and an educational booklet on preparing for disaster. Thank you to all of the volunteers who participated and braved the very chilly weather.

Two other Point of Dispensing (POD) drills were held in Cohoes and Green Island as a way to test potential POD locations those municipalities may utilize in a real event. These conventional flu clinic formats were also very successful and thank to all the MRC volunteers who made them possible.



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### For More Information:

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## THANK YOU FLU CLINIC VOLUNTEERS!!

We would like to thank the 15 MRC volunteers who helped staff community flu clinics in October and November throughout Albany County. Department of Health staff had very high praise for all who participated!! Thank you!



## **2008 MRC Trainings**

We are in the process of finalizing the 2008 MRC volunteer training schedule. Each training is designed to help our MRC volunteers meet the Core Competencies for MRC volunteers set by the National MRC Office. See page 3 of this newsletter for more information on the Core Competencies for MRC volunteers. The Core Competencies can also be viewed online at <http://www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/MRC/CoreCompetencies.cfm>.

Incident Command System (ICS) training has been scheduled on two separate dates but it is the same training, please try to attend one ICS training. Additional trainings that have yet to be scheduled include Family Preparedness, fit testing for N95 masks and photo identifications.

### **ICS 100/700 Training**

Wednesday, January 16, 2008 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Albany County Department of Health Auditorium

Speaker: Brian Wood, Albany County EMS Coordinator

Tuesday, March 11, 2008 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Albany County Department of Health Auditorium

Speaker: Brian Wood, Albany County EMS Coordinator

### **Weapons of Mass Destruction Awareness**

Thursday, February 7, 2008 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Albany County Department of Health Auditorium

Speaker: Captain John Layton, Critical Incident-Emergency Management Unit

### **An Introduction to Point of Dispensing** (for volunteers who have not yet attended a POD training)

Thursday, February 28, 2008 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Albany County Department of Health Auditorium

Speakers: Jill Dunkel & Rosemary Duncan, ACDOH

### **Cultural Competency and Working with Special Needs Populations**

Monday, March 17, 2008 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Location To Be Determined

Speaker: Kristine Gebbie DrPH, RN, Center for Health Policy, Columbia University

### **Psychological First Aid**

We are working with Valerie Cole to schedule a full-day training on psychological first aid for the non-mental health provider. If you would be interested in attending this full-day training, please contact Jill at 447-4633.

### **Drills**

On Saturday, December 1, 2007 five very brave MRC volunteers participated in a decontamination drill at the Elsmere Fire House. Each volunteer had to disrobe and shower in a decon tent. It was only about 20 degrees outside!! Thank you decon volunteers!!



# MRC Core Competencies



## BACKGROUND

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) members come from a variety of backgrounds and enter the program with varying credentials, capabilities and professional experience. There is currently no standard training or core set of competencies for MRC members; hence, there is variation in what each MRC is able to do. This diversity is a strength of the program, but also makes standardization across the MRCs difficult. In order for an MRC to fulfill its mission in the community, members of the MRC need to be competent to carry out their responsibilities. Training needs to be geared toward a common set of knowledge, skills and abilities.

The development of MRC competencies provides several benefits. Competencies define a core or standard set of activities that each MRC member would be able to perform. They also provide a framework for the program's training component and assist in describing what communities can expect of their MRCs. This 'uniformity' may allow for better interoperability between MRCs, making collaboration amongst MRC units and their external partners more efficient. The use of competencies has proven effective in public health worker training and assessment, and should translate well to the work of MRCs. The goal of this project is to develop a core set of competencies for MRC volunteers, laying the groundwork for future training and development activities of the program.



## COMPETENCY STATEMENTS

Competency statements are descriptive of expected *behavior* on the part of an individual. A competency can be composed of a range of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, but must be described as an observable or measurable action. Every competency statement includes an action verb and the object of that verb. Broad competency statements are frequently used in position descriptions or role assignments; narrower competency statements (often described as the sub-competencies) are needed when planning curricula to teach those competencies. Broad competency statements are generally measurable only over time, or in complex situations; sub-competencies used for educational purposes are generally measurable within the time span of a single class or course.



## CORE COMPETENCIES FOR MRC VOLUNTEERS

We encourage all active members of a Medical Reserve Corps unit, at a minimum, be able to:

1. Describe the procedure and steps necessary for the MRC member to protect health, safety, and overall well-being of themselves, their families, the team, and the community.
2. Document that the MRC member has a personal and family preparedness plan in place.
3. Describe the chain of command (e.g., Emergency Management Systems, ICS, NIMS), the integration of the MRC, and its application to a given incident.
4. Describe the role of the local MRC unit in public health and/or emergency response and its application to a given incident.
5. Describe the MRC member's communication role(s) and processes with response partners, media, general public, and others.
6. Describe the impact of an event on the mental health of the MRC member, responders, and others.
7. Demonstrate the MRC member's ability to follow procedures for assignment, activation, reporting, and deactivation.
8. Identify limits to own skills, knowledge, and abilities as they pertain to MRC role(s).