



## News and Notes From the MRC

(late) spring 2009

**T**he Franklin County & Columbus Medical Reserve Corps (FC&C MRC) is dedicated to establishing teams of professional and medical volunteers to contribute their skills and expertise during disasters, as well as throughout the year for community health promotion. More information can be found on our web site at [www.volunteermrc.org](http://www.volunteermrc.org).

### Operation Pills in People Full-Scale Exercise POSTPONED

Operation Pills in People (Operation PIP), a full-scale exercise that was to be held August 17-20, 2009, HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL SUMMER OF 2010. Due to the public health response to the H1N1 virus, this exercise and the drills leading up to it have been postponed until next summer. We are still just as committed to this exercise, but real world events must take precedence.

#### POSTPONED:

Operation PIP Mini-POD Drill, June 18—will now take place next spring  
Operation PIP Exercise, August 20th—will now take place next summer

### Sign Up for Outreach at Summer Festivals: Spread the Word about Preparedness and the MRC

Recent events provide us with an opportunity to educate a "tuned in" public. These events also show the necessity and value of MRC volunteers. Help us seize this opportunity to teach the public about the importance of emergency preparedness and to recruit new volunteers.

This summer the FC&C MRC will be tabling at 2 festivals to inform the public about the Medical Reserve Corps, and educate those about personal preparedness. Members can sign up for a 4 hour shift with 2 people per shift. All you have to do is bring your enthusiastic self, and make sure you leave time to enjoy the festivities before or after your shift. We had a blast at our recruitment events last year, so please join us for the fun again this summer!

#### Grandview Lazy Daze of Summer Festival

Saturday July 18<sup>th</sup> from 11 am - 6pm (Shifts from 11 am-2:30 pm and 2:30pm -6 pm)

Festival will be held on the lawn of the Grandview Public Library. Enjoy: Crafts, Food, Music & Performances, Free children's art activities, Silent Auction, and Book & AV Sale. For more info: [www.ghpl.org/community/lazydaze.php](http://www.ghpl.org/community/lazydaze.php)

#### Dublin Irish Festival

Friday July 31<sup>st</sup> from 4 pm - Midnight (Shifts from 4 pm - 8 pm)

Saturday August 1<sup>st</sup> from 11 am - Midnight (Shifts from 11 am - 3 pm and 3 pm - 7pm)

Sunday August 2<sup>nd</sup> from 11 am - 9 pm (Shifts from 11 am - 3 pm and 3 pm - 7 pm)

Festival will be located at Coffman Park at 5600 Post Road, Dublin Ohio. Enjoy music performances, dance performances, dance instruction, pipe and drum bands, shopping and so much more! For more information: [www.dublinirishfestival.org](http://www.dublinirishfestival.org)

Please email [mrcintern@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:mrcintern@franklincountyohio.gov) if interested in volunteering. Include your name, shift you would prefer to work, and if you will be driving to the event. Thanks for your help!

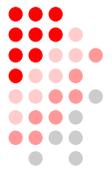
-By Katie Marhefka



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## MRC Volunteers Trained and On Call for 2009 H1N1 Outbreak

Members of our Franklin County & Columbus MRC (FC&C MRC) team participated in two important trainings and were on-call to assist with the H1N1 virus (also called swine flu) response in April and May. Volunteers were trained to conduct contact investigation calls. These are the calls to the contacts of known or probable H1N1 flu cases in Franklin County. Thirteen nurses were trained. These nurses served as volunteers by being on-call in the evening and weekend hours to provide assistance making these calls from home. Thank you to all of the volunteers that participated! We may need your help again this fall during flu season. If you are interested in being trained to make calls, please send your availability for this one hour training to [rlfranz@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:rlfranz@franklincountyohio.gov). We will hold another training this summer.



(L-R) Medical Director LeMaile-Williams, Health Commissioners Long and Tilgner give a press briefing about the H1N1 cases in Franklin County.

Another group of volunteers were trained to serve in our Private Distribution Site. These volunteers will be called upon to respond if we request items from the federal cache of protective equipment and medicine that is now housed in the region. If we need these items, the volunteers will be called through the Central Ohio Health Alert Network to respond to our local Private Distribution Site. Thanks to all that attended the training!

We may need more help in the fall for flu season. For any of you that have not yet completed your orientation session, THE BEST WAY TO HELP US OUT NEXT FALL IS TO COMPLETE YOUR ORIENTATION AND HAVE YOUR PHOTO TAKEN FOR YOUR ID BADGE THIS SUMMER! This will help us respond quickly next fall with the largest possible number of trained and credentialed volunteers. Several of the Contact Investigation trainings will also be offered this summer for those that want to be involved. Additional emails with the details will be forthcoming. Thanks for your interest! Please complete your orientation.

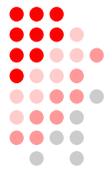
## Planning and Preparing for a Possible Pandemic Flu

As health officials combat the new influenza virus known as H1N1 or swine flu with detection, diagnosis, and treatment protocols, it's important to realize that managing a major disease outbreak requires participation from everyone. This recent flu outbreak reminds us how important it is to be prepared and how we all need to take the time now to get ready for a possible pandemic flu.

The U.S. Departments of Homeland Security (DHS) and Health and Human Services (HHS), including the HHS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have the lead roles for the nation's response to the H1N1 flu outbreak. For more information on the H1N1 flu, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). For a PDF version of pandemic flu preparedness for individuals and families, visit <http://www.citizencorps.gov/news/press/2009/PreparePandemicFlu.shtm>. This document is a great overview of important steps you can take, including plans, additions to your emergency kit, and how to care for someone who is sick. Please check it out now!

The federal government, each state, and every Ohio county are required to have Pandemic Flu plans in place which go into effect in the event a pandemic flu. These plans are to ensure government services continue and to manage public communications and guidance on the possible need for social distancing, to include school closings and telework options.

The FC&C MRC is represented in the community's public health, medical and emergency services infrastructure, and participates in planning processes. *(More about the MRC's Role on Page 4)*



## Public Health Emergency Training: Mass Antibiotic Dispensing for First Responders



Tuesday July 7th at 9 a.m.

Wednesday July 8th at 2 p.m.

Thursday July 9th at 9 a.m.

At the Columbus Fire Training Academy, 3639 Parsons Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43207

This training will cover antibiotic dispensing during a public health emergency to our Franklin County first responder community. It is for EMT-Basics, EMT-Intermediates and Paramedics. This will be a potential role for the MRC during a disaster situation. CEUs will be available. The event is Sponsored by the Franklin County Board of Health and Columbus Public Health. Please RSVP by Tuesday, June 30th to Katie Lewis at [kmlewis@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:kmlewis@franklincountyohio.gov) or at 614-462-6307. Please let Katie know that you are an MRC volunteer.

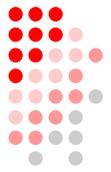
### News and Notes from our Partners

- Follow this link to the Spring 2009 issue of *Ohio Citizen Corps E-News*, an online publication that brings updates on Ohio Citizen Corps programs. [http://www.serveohio.org/News/Newsletters/ServeOhioNews\\_2009\\_Spring.html](http://www.serveohio.org/News/Newsletters/ServeOhioNews_2009_Spring.html)
- Health Care Professionals Needed for Camp Hamwi 2009, a seasonal, residential camp for youth with diabetes. Camp Hamwi is located at the Camp Mohaven campgrounds in Danville, Ohio, a rustic setting on 600 acres, including a health center, lodge/dinning hall, simple rustic cabins, & modern bathhouses. Health care professionals are needed for a commitment of one or two week(s) and are assigned a cabin of either boys or girls. Health care professionals oversee the diabetes management of their assigned cabin throughout the week under the supervision of an experienced charge nurse and staff physicians, as well as enjoying many of the activities and events with the youth. Health care professionals collaborate with an interdisciplinary team of professionals including physicians, nurses, dietitians, certified diabetes educators and counselors. A stipend pay is provided for all medical staff. TO LEARN MORE: Contact the Central Ohio Diabetes Association at 884-4400, (800) 422-7946 or email at [dhonigford@diabetesohio.org](mailto:dhonigford@diabetesohio.org)
- Introduction to Disaster Surge for Public Health Nurses. This new On-line Course is the first course in a series of four on-line modules. It provides an overview of the public health nurse's role in preparedness for, response to, and recovery from disaster surge incidents. The Public Health Nursing Surge Curriculum is a competency-based curriculum founded on the 25 Public Health Nursing Competencies Related to Surge Events. This is an on-line course which can be completed on your own time from the location of your choice. The instructor is Barbara J. Polivka, Ph.D., RN, Associate Professor and Specialty Program Director, OSU College of Nursing. These courses are being offered at no cost through July 31, 2009. Beginning August 1, 2009 there will be a \$35 per module fee or \$100 for all four modules.

To register, log on to OhioTRAIN at <https://oh.train.org>, enter Course ID #1016452 in the Search by Course ID box. Click the workshop title to open the workshop description, then click the Registration tab and follow the prompts.

Application has been submitted for continuing education to the Ohio Nurses Association. Criteria for completion include a passing grade (75%) on the post-assessment and completion of the evaluation. Questions regarding continuing education should be directed to Shirley Funt at [owdregistration@cph.osu.edu](mailto:owdregistration@cph.osu.edu). Sponsored by the Ohio Center for Public Health Preparedness.

- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Ad Council have joined with Discovery Education to announce *Ready Classroom*, an online educational program. Ready Classroom will provide elementary and middle school teachers with resources to integrate natural disaster preparedness information into their curriculum. The program is an extension of *Ready Kids*, a nationwide effort designed to encourage children and families to take action and prepare for emergencies. The online resource, [www.discoveryeducation.com/readyclassroom](http://www.discoveryeducation.com/readyclassroom), provides teachers with activities, lesson plans and multimedia tools that teach students how natural disasters develop and inspires them to build their own emergency preparedness plans with their families. The site features grade-specific lesson plans (K-8), videos, games, puzzles and bulletin board recommendations.



### ***From Page 2, Preparing for Flu***

The FC&C MRC will work to educate volunteers about influenza, especially the H1N1 flu, and infection control and clinical guidelines, as well as personal preparedness methods. As part of the federal guidance for our organization, we will ensure the MRC unit is included in state and local plans for vaccine/antiviral distribution, use and monitoring; and in the communication plan regarding medicine locations and protocols. We will also ensure the influenza response plan and/or Emergency Operations Plan for the county clearly describes the process necessary to request, activate and utilize the MRC. Currently our MRC Response Plan is being reviewed by Franklin County Emergency Management & Homeland Security and will soon be a part of the county plan.

The MRC also encourages annual influenza vaccination for MRC members, and is working to develop and disseminate materials covering influenza fundamentals (e.g. signs and symptoms of influenza and modes of transmission), personal and family protection and response strategies. Our participation at summer festivals will also help us to spread the word about the importance of preparedness.

It is important for the MRC to stress the following information both to volunteers and for the volunteers to spread this information to others: Avoid close contact with people who are sick; stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick; cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze; wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze; and practice other good health habits like getting plenty of sleep, being physically active, managing stress, drinking plenty of fluids and eating nutritious food. This summer we will be focusing on preparing for fall flu season, in case the H1N1 virus requires our assistance at that time. We will be scheduling a injection refresher course for those licensed to perform injections that do not commonly perform them during their daily work duties. These volunteers can then help us at seasonal flu shot clinics, or can help disseminate a H1N1 vaccine if one is available. Stay tuned this summer for more ways to help us prepared for next fall's flu season.

## **JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER TEAMS**

### **Animal Response Team**

Any volunteer having a background, interest or licensure in animal care is welcome to join the Franklin County & Columbus MRC Animal Response Team (ART). This team seeks to protect the health and respond to the needs of animals involved in a disaster. This may involve containment of animal diseases, animal sheltering and rescue, distribution of medicine to animals and a number of other responses.



### **Behavioral Health Team**

We currently have 79 mental health volunteers, and have just recruited a number of school counselors as auxiliary help. Our first agenda items include creating protocol sheets for responding volunteers.

### **POD Team**

A POD, or Point of Dispensing, is a method of response in a public health crisis requiring the widespread distribution of medication. In the event of such an emergency, multiple PODs may be set up throughout the community to offer medication to many people. Clinical volunteers such as pharmacists, nurses, paramedics, mental health professionals and physicians are encouraged to join as well as non-clinical members of the community with traffic control, computer, data entry, management, reception and other skills.

### **Techie Team**

Do you have audio visual or computer talents? If you do, then the MRC needs your help with the Mobile Joint Information Center. The trailer has TVs, satellite dishes, computers, generators and other communications equipment and we are looking for a few good volunteers with the interest and skill to be a part of our Techie Team. This team may also serve other technological needs at a medication center during a disaster.

### **Language Team**

Are you fluent in another language in addition to English? Are you willing to volunteer to help with language capabilities during a disaster? We would love to have you serve on a language team! We are focusing on Spanish, American Sign Language and Somali at this point, but please let us know about any language capability you may have.

Send an email to [rlfranz@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:rlfranz@franklincountyohio.gov) to join any of our teams.