



News and Notes From the MRC

The 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.

Operation Pills in People: MRC To Play an Important Role In a Full-Scale Exercise

Operation Pills in People (Operation PIP) is a full-scale exercise to be held August 17-20, 2009, that will be based on a simulated anthrax attack. A full-scale exercise means that there will be citizens playing the part of clients in need of medication while actual health department employees, MRC Volunteers and state officials respond as if it were a true incident. In a real event, the Strategic National Stockpile (a cache of medications) would be distributed from the Federal government to the State government down to the local public health partners. This exercise is a grant requirement for local health departments, and the FC&C MRC will be fulfilling our pre-determined role in the distribution of these medications.

Planning for this exercise began in the fall of 2007. The FC&C MRC Coordinator is a member of the Steering Committee working on coordination of the event. MRC volunteers will be serving as workers in a Point of Distribution (POD), just as they would during a real event where the distribution of medication became a necessity. Those wishing to be included as players in the exercise are encouraged to join our POD Team.

Upcoming Events

The following list includes several of the trainings and drills we are holding to prepare ourselves for the big exercise. Interested volunteers should email rlfranz@franklincountyohio.gov. We are looking for both medical and non-medical volunteers- and we have some great opportunities for our pharmacy volunteers. Please include your name and the event you would like to attend. More events will continue to be planned, so be on the lookout for additional opportunities.

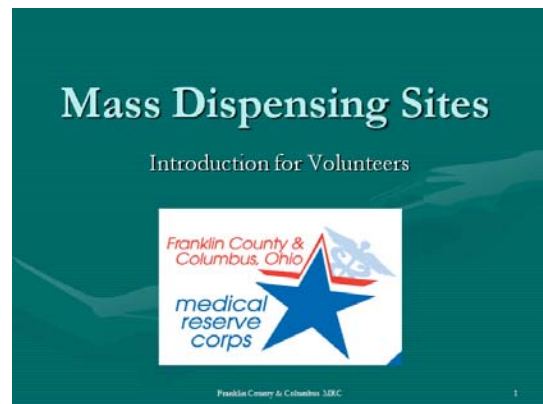
Save these Dates!

- POD Workshop for POD Team members, February 19th, 5:30-7:30pm -JOIN NOW!
- Operation PIP Mini-POD Drill, June 18, 1-4pm
- PIP Player Training, August 13, Time TBA
- Operation PIP Exercise, Mid-Day on August 20th



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Sign Up for Our POD Workshop: February 19

As we prepare to help the people of Franklin County in an emergency, we want to be sure that part of that preparation includes the ability to distribute medicine to all of Franklin County's residents, should that become necessary. Our POD Team will prepare for this situation while building their skills and knowledge in preparation for our August 2009 exercise. You may participate on the team and in this workshop even if you are not able to attend the August exercise.

This workshop is open to both medical and non-medical volunteers. We will review the POD 101 Training and solicit feedback, play the POD Game and get to know other members of the team. The training will be conducted by Jana Parrish and Katie Lewis, City Readiness Initiative Planners, and Robin Franz, MRC Coordinator, on Thursday, February 19th from 5:30-7:30pm, Columbus Public Health, 240 Parson Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43215. You must RSVP to attend. Questions and RSVPs can be directed to Robin Franz at rlfranz@franklincountyohio.gov.



MRC Volunteers Deployed in September 2008 Windstorm

The Franklin County & Columbus MRC (FC&C MRC) provided for the medical needs of the clients at the American Red Cross of Greater Columbus disaster relief shelter during the September, 2008, wind storm response, starting Monday, September 15th at 4pm and concluding Sunday September 21st. Nearly 20 trained and credentialed volunteers were activated by the Red Cross through the Emergency Operations Center at the Emergency Management and Homeland Security office, and were sent by the MRC Coordinator directly to the shelter.

Volunteers were contacted through our Central Ohio Health Alert Network (COHAN) contact system with first an alert message and then an activation message to our medical volunteers. During this response, only medical volunteers were needed. If you are a medical volunteer and did not receive a call, please be sure that your contact information in the COHAN is up to date. The FC&C MRC sent EMT's and nurses, and also partnered with Columbus Public Health so their nurses could have a chance to volunteer as well. Several mental health providers volunteered during meal hours, working with clients that needed assistance. The shelter provided 96 overnight stays, 2,561 meals, and 867 snacks.

Volunteers reported that the most common needs were clients seeking assistance with prescription refills, needs for over-the-counter medications, blood pressure checks, and assisting clients with medical provider phone numbers. We are excited to be partnering with the Red Cross, and will continue to work on new shelter initiatives in 2009. Thanks to all our volunteers that participated. Your help was a valuable part of Franklin County's response!

- 1 Study Each Module
- 2 Take the Quiz
- 3 Get Certified

New Year's Resolution Idea: Complete Your Orientation In-Person or Online!

For those of you that have not yet completed your mandatory orientation session, you now have the opportunity to complete the requirement either online or in-person. If you would like to join us for the in-person session, please mark your calendars for March 4!

What: In-Person Orientation Session

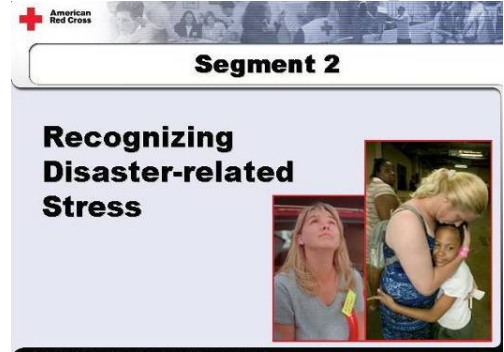
When: March 4th, 2009, 5:30-7:30pm

Where: Franklin County Board of Health, 280 E. Broad Street, Columbus, OH

Who: Volunteers that have not yet completed the Orientation in-person or online

If you would like to participate in this event, send an email with 'In-Person Orientation' in the subject line to Robin, rlfranz@franklincountyohio.gov. YOU MUST REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT!

The online FC&C MRC orientation fulfills the training requirement for MRC membership, and can be completed at your leisure. This online course is for those volunteers with computer access (with speakers) and a need for a more flexible orientation time. All volunteers taking the online course will need to come in to the FC&C MRC office at their convenience to allow county officials to check wallet license cards, driver's licenses and have a photo taken for an ID badge. If you are interested please send an email to mrc@franklincountyohio.gov with the words "online orientation" in the subject line. Orientation is REQUIRED of all volunteers with the MRC. If you want to be called during a disaster, you must complete this training.



Segment 2

Recognizing Disaster-related Stress

Psychological First Aid: Helping Others in Times of Stress

Free CEUs with online Psychological First Aid Course

For those of you that missed our online webcast last April, you are in luck. The training is now available online! Registration still works in the same way, online at OH TRAIN (oh.train.org) and if you complete the evaluation at the end of the course 3.5 hours of continuing education credits are provided.

Psychological First Aid: Helping Others in Times of Stress is designed around the basic principles of Psychological First Aid (PFA). PFA triage care is the first line of mental health help during a disaster and its understanding is a very important facet to public health preparedness.

Instructions for how to register can be found at <http://www.volunteermrc.org/psychologicalfirstaid.html>.



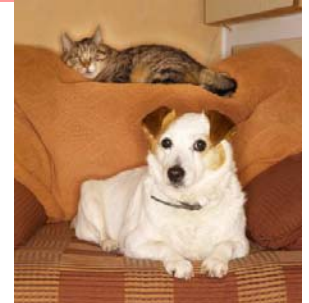
News and Notes from our Partners

- Follow this link to the Winter 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/OCCNews2009Winter.html>
- Check out this upcoming conference: 13th Management of Humanitarian Emergencies: Focus on Children and Families conference being held June 15-19, 2009 at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. This intensive interactive course examines the key problems and priorities in disaster situations as they relate to the most vulnerable victims of disasters. Sessions are taught by faculty with years of international field experience. Please visit the web site (<http://cme.case.edu>) for complete program details.

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, and will help with Operation PIP in August of 2009.

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 to join any of our teams.

Oxygen Trailer Training: Join Our Advanced Care Shelter Team!

Thanks to the generous support of the Central Ohio Trauma System, the Franklin County & Columbus Medical Reserve Corps can now respond to events with a mobile oxygen dispensing system to help support the oxygen needs of the public during a disaster. These trailers can support the oxygen needs of up to 90 people, and can be deployed throughout central Ohio.

We are looking for a team of medical volunteers who are willing to be to be deployed with the resource to be trained on the use of this equipment. These trailers will most likely be deployed to a shelter setting. If you have a current medical license (EMT, nurse, MD, etc) and are interested in being involved please send an email to rlfranz@franklincountyohio.gov with the words "Oxygen Training" in the subject line. MRC Orientation (either online or in-person) must be completed first. **Event will be held on a Saturday in March or April (Please email availability), 9am-1pm**