

Being a READY Rural

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OVERVIEW

Rural communities face many challenges and resource limitations. When an emergency arises, it is not the time to scramble to find the lacking resources. Ideally, resource needs have been identified and MOUs are put in place, ready to access if needed. Rural hospitals are a hub of the community and can lead the way in emergency preparedness collaboration and organization by establishing relationships, contacts, and MOUs with businesses, schools, and community



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Topics for Consideration

- RURAL COMMUNITIES
- Why Rurals Should be READY?
- How to be READY
- CHALLENGES of Rural Areas
- What to do about the CHALLENGES
- IDENTIFY
- SHARE
- MOU's
- Collaborate & Communicate
- Review

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You Live **Where?**

- RURALS have REAL PROBLEMS
- RURALS have REAL EMERGENCIES
- RURALS lack RESOURCES
- RURALS need collaborative HELP
- RURALS need to PLAN
- RURALS need to be READY



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Mayers Memorial Healthcare District

SHASTA
County Map, California



- **Rural**
- **Frontier**
- **Critical access**

Service area of 8000+ square miles

Other Rural Facilities in our area include:

- Modoc Medical Center
- Surprise Valley Healthcare District
- Plumas District
- Eastern Plumas
- Seneca (Chester)
- Mountain Communities



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Why is it Important?

Rural communities face many challenges and resource limitations. Rural hospitals are a hub of the community and can lead the way in emergency preparedness. Collaboration and organization is essential. Establishing relationships, contacts and MOU's with businesses, schools and community organizations is a key to being prepared in an emergency.



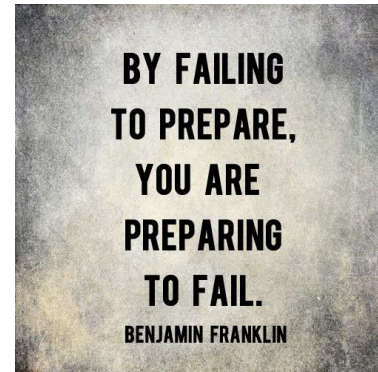
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How to be READY...

Preparation is the KEY!

Emergency preparedness is critically important for all healthcare facilities, including rural hospitals. Rural hospitals often face unique challenges and considerations in ensuring they are ready to respond effectively to emergencies.



The Challenges

- LIMITED RESOURCES
- GEOGRAPHICAL ISOLATION
- PATIENT VULNERABILITY
- EXTENDED TRANSPORT TIME
- UNIQUE LOCAL RISKS
- COMMUNITY RESILIENCE
- STAFF TRAINING AND EDUCATION
- RESOURCE SHARING
- COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE
- REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS
- PUBLIC TRUST



ABOUT the Challenges

- 1. Limited Resources:** Rural hospitals typically have fewer resources, both in terms of staff and equipment, compared to larger urban hospitals. Effective preparedness planning helps them make the most of their available resources during emergencies.
- 2. Geographical Isolation:** Rural hospitals are often located in remote areas, far from larger medical centers. This geographical isolation can make it more difficult for patients to access care during emergencies, emphasizing the importance of having well-prepared local facilities.
- 3. Patient Vulnerability:** Rural communities may have higher percentages of elderly or medically vulnerable populations. Emergency preparedness is essential to provide the necessary care for these patients, who may be more susceptible to the effects of disasters.
- 4. Extended Transport Times:** It may take longer to transport patients from rural areas to larger hospitals, especially during adverse weather conditions or natural disasters. Rural hospitals need to be prepared to stabilize patients and provide initial care until they can be safely transported.

ABOUT the Challenges (cont.)

- 5. Unique Local Risks:** Rural areas might face specific risks, such as agricultural accidents, industrial incidents, or natural disasters like wildfires or flooding. Hospitals must be prepared to address these unique challenges.
- 6. Community Resilience:** Rural hospitals often serve as vital hubs in their communities. Their preparedness and ability to respond to emergencies can significantly impact the overall resilience of the community.
- 7. Staff Training:** Emergency preparedness training is essential for healthcare staff. Rural hospitals may have a smaller pool of healthcare professionals, making it crucial that those on staff are well-trained in emergency response protocols.
- 8. Resource Sharing:** Rural hospitals often need to collaborate with local agencies, clinics, and community organizations during emergencies. Effective preparedness planning includes establishing these partnerships in advance.

ABOUT the Challenges (cont.)

- 9. Communication Infrastructure:** Rural areas may have less robust communication infrastructure, which can hinder communication during emergencies. Hospitals should invest in backup communication systems to ensure continuous contact with emergency services and other facilities.
- 10. Regulatory Requirements:** Many regulatory agencies require healthcare facilities to have comprehensive emergency preparedness plans in place. Compliance with these regulations is essential to maintain accreditation and funding.
- 11. Public Trust:** Maintaining public trust is critical for rural hospitals. Being well-prepared and responsive during emergencies can help build and maintain trust within the local community.



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You've got Challenges? Now What?

- Identify **resource limitations** and needs in rural areas
- Determine types of **community collaboration and MOU's** that would benefit rural hospitals and fill the resource gaps
- Identify methods of contact in **preparation** instead of **response**
- Discuss the **preparation, maintenance, and use** of MOU's in an emergency/disaster situation
- Discuss the benefit of a **community collaborative** group and resource contact list



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Identify Needs/Limitations

WHAT...

- Staff
- Supplies
- Utilities
- Food, Water, etc.
- Infrastructure needs

DON'T Reinvent the Wheel

Share resources, training...Learn from one another.

Sharing resources, training, and learning from one another in emergency preparation is essential for building a resilient and effective response to a wide range of emergencies.

It optimizes resource utilization, enhances preparedness, and improves the overall effectiveness of response efforts, ultimately saving lives and reducing the impact of disasters.

WHY REINVENT THE
WHEEL WHEN YOU
DON'T HAVE TO?



Contacts

Know Who You Need to Know *Before* You Need to Know Them

- PIO to PIO
- Admin to Admin
- Logistics to Logistics
- Finance to Finance



Other Resource Contacts:

- Local Business
- School Districts
- Emergency Services
- Service Organizations
- Chambers, local clubs

MOU's

Go from...	To...
Meaningless	Meaningful
Obsolete	Opportunities
Underused	Utilized



A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is a type of agreement between two (bilateral) or more (multilateral) parties. It expresses a convergence of will between the parties, indicating an intended common line of action. It is often used in cases where parties either do not imply a legal commitment or in situations where the parties cannot create a legally enforceable agreement. It is a more formal alternative to a gentlemen's agreement.

Agreements with who and for what?



For emergency preparedness, a MOU is used to establish a mutual understanding of how and to what extent organizations will respond to and support each other during an emergency or disaster incident. Developing MOU's is an essential element of a strong and effective emergency plan.

- Transfer Facilities
- Temporary Staffing
- Clinics (supplies, etc.)
- Vendors
- Water, Fuel
- Building Rentals
- Equipment (Generators, fans, etc.)

WHY use MOU's

- Clarify Roles & Responsibilities
- Facilitate Coordination
- Establish Legal Framework
- Define Resource Sharing
- Enable Information Sharing
- Enhance Preparedness
- Streamline Processes
- Build Trust
- Adapt to Specific Needs

How MOU's Benefit Rurals

- **Resource Allocation:** MOUs outline how resources, such as personnel, equipment, and funding, will be allocated and shared among stakeholders. This helps ensure that resources are used effectively and fairly in rural settings.
- **Collaboration and Coordination:** Rural emergencies often require collaboration between multiple entities, including local governments, nonprofits, and volunteers. MOU's facilitate coordination, reducing duplication of efforts and maximizing the use of available resources
- **Community Engagement:** MOU's can involve local community groups and volunteers, fostering a sense of ownership and involvement in the emergency response. This can be especially valuable in rural areas where community support is crucial.
- **Leveraging Local Knowledge:** Rural communities often have unique knowledge and resources. MOUs can harness this local knowledge and incorporate it into the emergency response strategy.
- **Response Time Reduction:** MOUs can include provisions for rapid response, allowing rural communities to initiate emergency measures more quickly. This is vital in situations like natural disasters where time is of the essence.'



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Prepare and Organize



- Identify Needs – What Resource is Needed
- Who is participating in the MOU?
- Why is the MOU necessary?
- What is the agreement you want to achieve with the MOU?



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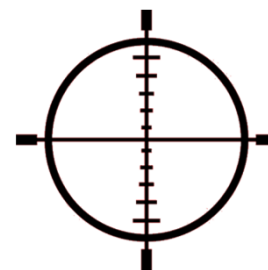
Components of MOU's

- Purpose
- Scope
- Definitions
- Policy
- User Procedure Requirements
- Maintenance
- Oversight
- Compliance Responsibility
- Updates

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Purpose and Scope

- When will it be used?
- How will it be used?
- Who will it be used by?

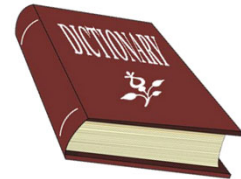


It is important that there is a clear understanding of the type of agreement that is being entered into to ensure the appropriate procedures are followed.

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Definitions and Policy

- Terms associated with the process
 - ✓ Operational, Technical
 - ✓ Avoid Confusion
- Community Specific Terms or Acronyms
- Define when various resources come into play
- Define who has the authority to authorize resources
- Operating policies associated with resources



User Requirements

- Obligations of the agreement
- Training requirements
- Financial obligations

Maintenance, Oversight, Compliance

- Who is responsible for maintaining the agreement?
- How often to review?
- Standard operating procedures
- Who is responsible for training?

Updates

- Who can modify the MOU? Define
- How to modify and update MOU? Define
- Do updates need signatures?
- How often should the MOU be updated?

Making MOU's Work for Rurals

"May have to sacrifice being prioritized as highest priority for some lesser level of prioritization to get an MOU in place. It is better to have an MOU in place than to not have one. Lean on the other agencies in your area that can help in an emergency situation and try to get MOUs in place with those that have access to other resources to expand your ability to access resources in an emergency. I think in smaller communities it makes more sense to try to leverage MOUs with organizations that already have those resources in place and MOUs in place if possible. Our County OES and public health department are those two key organizations for us. Get MOUs in place where you can, but if you can't cover all your needs try to find other organizations that can cover those needs and have MOUs in place that you can get an MOU in place with."

"Remind your local retailers that you have these MOU's with them and work often with the organizations you have MOU's with. In other words keep you name in lights. The closer you are to another facility the more useful the MOU's are. As I mentioned earlier we're fairly sure we'll be on our own for some time."

MORE....

MOU's will develop easier as a result of:

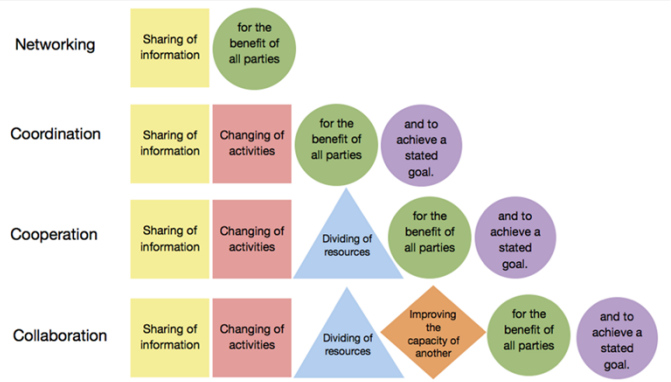
Successful MOU's require careful planning, clear communication, and ongoing commitment from all parties involved. When these factors are effectively managed, MOU's can be valuable tools for collaboration and achieving shared goals.

Collaborate & Communicate

COLLABORATION

- Common Data Base of Resources
- Contacts Established
- Communication Lines Open
- Awareness of local needs by entity
- Foundation for establishing MOU's

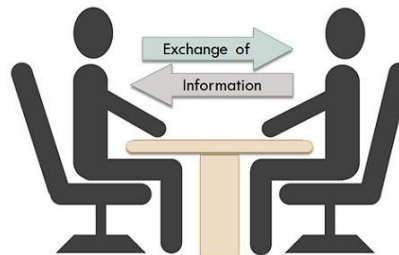
Collaborative Advantage



Collaboration
 allows us to
 know
 more than we are
 capable of knowing
 by
 ourselves.
 - Paul Solarz

Communication

Effective communication is the linchpin of successful MOUs. It ensures that all parties are on the same page, committed to the agreement's goals, and able to adapt to changing circumstances. Clear and open communication strengthens partnerships and enhances the likelihood of achieving the intended outcomes of the MOU.



Review

Are you a **READY** Rural?



LATIMES.COM
E. coli hammers a California town, sending patients to ER and shutting down restaurants





Questions



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