



Emergency Preparedness Plans (EPP)

A GUIDE TO RESOURCES AND TEMPLATES FOR NURSING HOMES

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) defines preparedness as a “continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking corrective action in an effort to ensure effective coordination during incident response.”



The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Emergency Preparedness Requirements for Medicare and Medicaid Participating Providers and Suppliers stresses the importance of all organizations having a plan that addresses the four core elements of preparedness:

1. Risk Assessment and Emergency Planning
2. Communications
3. Policies and Procedures
4. Training and Testing

This guide includes links to key guidance, training and sample templates to help build or refine a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan (EPP). Remember to check links when reviewing facility plans as guidance may change frequently.

Tips for EPP plans:

1. Engage the community and/or county emergency preparedness personnel in developing your plans.
2. Ensure your plan is accessible in offsite locations, such as the administrator’s or director of nursing’s vehicle, in the event your facility has to be evacuated with extreme haste.

3. Crosswalk plans to identify areas where programs intersect. For example, the evacuation plan should include an assessment of each potential evacuation site for elopement risks as well as plans to ensure the safety of wandering residents in that environment. This may be an area where volunteers could potentially provide support (see toolkit for working with volunteers below).
4. Include the signs and symptoms of trauma or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in clinical alert programs, such as Stop and Watch.
5. If utilizing contract labor, ensure the onboarding process includes plan locations and key elements.
6. Utilize your resident and family councils to obtain input into various components of your disaster plan. An ad hoc group of families and care partners can be convened when a formal family council is not in place. Patients, residents and families can provide invaluable input into many aspects of EPP plans and can:
 - Identify trusted messengers in the community.
 - Review prepared messaging in languages spoken in your community.
 - Provide insights into preferred communication channels.
 - Serve as links to key community disaster services or disaster recovery personnel.
7. Use the link below to proactively register your facility for the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) program.

CMS Guidance		Notes
CMS	State Operations Manual (SOM) Appendix PP (Rev 211, 02/02/2023)	Pages 679-682 discuss a facility-based and community-based risk assessment utilizing an all-hazards approach.
	Suggested Emergency Planning Checklist For Individuals Living In Long-Term Care Facilities, Their Families, Personal Caregivers, Guardians & Friends	CMS checklist covers emergency planning, helping residents in a relocation, state ombudsman responsibilities and an Ombudsman LTC facility resident evacuation assessment checklist.
	Health Care Provider Guidance	CMS guidance for emergency preparedness and surveys for health care providers, with information related to multiple types of hazards.
	CMS Updated Guidance on Emergency Preparedness: Appendix Z	This guidance highlights, in red font, changes that were effective as of 4/16/21.
	Long Term Care Requirments: CMS Emergency Preparedness Final Rule 3/26/2021	This reference tool can be used as a crosswalk between the CMS emergency preparedness requirements and rules.
Engaging Residents and Family		Recommendations and Notes
Engaging Residents, Families and Volunteers	Office of Minority Health E-Course: Cultural Competency for Disaster Preparedness and Crisis Response	Free online training with guidance to help raise awareness of the role care partners can play during a disaster. Plan for interpreters, translators, and pre-made graphic signs.
	Disaster Preparedness Plan Booklet	The disaster preparedness booklet (also available in Spanish) is an example of a resource that can be provided to the families of patients, residents and staff to help ease concerns about their loved ones with serious illnesses during a disaster.
	Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Capabilities: National Standards for State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Public Health—October 2018	The disaster preparedness booklet (also available in Spanish) is an example of a resource that can be provided to the families of patients, residents and staff to help ease concerns about their loved ones with serious illnesses during a disaster.
Hazard Vulnerability and Facility Assessments		Notes
Hazard Vulnerability	Kaiser Permanente Hazard Vulnerability Assessment Tool	A hazard vulnerability assessment tool using an “all hazards approach” (-§483.73(a)).
Facility Assessment	QIO Facility Assessment Tool	Sample facility assessment tool.
Templates and Resources		
ASPR TRACIE	Sample Community Health Clinic Template	Highlighted are the Health Clinic and Healthcare Coalition templates.
	ASPR TRACIE Healthcare Coalition Resources	CMS encourages health care facilities, particularly those in neighboring geographic areas, to collaborate and build relationships that will allow facilities to share and leverage resources.
	Emergency Preparedness Requirements for Medicare and Medicaid Participating Providers and Suppliers (CMS EP Rule)	Facilities can use the checklists developed by Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response’s (ASPR’s) Technical Resources and Assistance Center and Information Exchange (TRACIE) and identify the location for each requirement. See all checklists under Facility-Specific Requirement Overviews.
CDC	Emergency Action Plan Template	This template help you develop (or revise) your own EPP.

Minnesota Department of Health	Long-Term Care (LTC) Emergency Preparedness	Tools and resources provided by a state health department to assist with specific planning for LTCs, including a hazard vulnerability assessment. Similar resources may be obtainable from the facility's state association.
Specific Topic Resources		Notes
Disclaimer: The templates shared are examples only. Review and validate your state and local requirements before developing your plan. See the state EPP websites on the next page.		
Workforce Violence/Mass Trauma	Hospitals and Healthcare Facilities: Security Awareness for Soft Targets and Crowded Places	This resource includes potential indicators and actions during an active shooter event, mitigation strategies and protective measures.
	Active Shooter Resource	Additional resources and links for workplace violence and cyber-security. Utilize the facility hazard vulnerability assessment to determine what types of events are the highest risk and update as risks change. For example, a staff member, resident or family member informs facility leadership of a new domestic violent threat or restraining order. That information should result in a plan review and revisions to address that potential workforce violence/mass trauma event.
	Prevention Violence in Healthcare Gap Analysis	Facilities can complete this assessment to identify gaps and prioritize improvement opportunities relation to beginning or enhancing their workplace violence programs.
	Worker Safety in Hospitals - Preventing Workplace Violence in Healthcare Occupational Safety and Health Administration	Provides guidance for evaluating and implementing safety protocols related to workplace assaults. Provides a framework for evaluating patient, client, setting and organizational risk factors with strategies for prevention, identification, and response.
	Ready, Set, Go! Checklist - Armed Assailant	Alliant Health Solutions makes creating your plan to address workplace violence fast, easy, and efficient for you and your team.
Opioid Crisis	Decrease Opioid Misuse - NQIC	The Alliant Health Solutions website offers resources that can be used in EPP plans to increase facility best practices, reduce opioid utilization rates and raise staff, patient and family awareness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naloxone in Nursing Homes: A Checklist for Process Review • Co-Prescribing Naloxone with Opioids • Naloxone Saves Lives: Is Naloxone For Me • Physician Resources for Opioid Tapering • Medication Safe Use /Disposal Tips
Trauma Informed Care	Trauma Informed Care Training for Nursing Assistants	Alliant Health Solutions PowerPoint training with Pre-and-Post-Learning Assessment and Answer Guide can be used with nursing assistants and non-licensed frontline staff (i.e., life enrichment, housekeeping, and laundry staff) to provide an overview of trauma signs, symptoms and staff role when observing.
	CMS Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/Quality, Safety & Oversight Group	CMS Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/Quality, Safety & Oversight Group QSO-11-19 NH dated June 29, 2022.
	AMDA ON-THE-GO A podcast by Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine	AMDA On-The-Go April 2022 Podcast episode on natural disasters and mental health.
	Psychological First Aid Resources	Includes link to SAMHSA's disaster mobile app and self-care resources.
	Guidance to Surveyors for Long-Term Care Facilities	Addresses cultural competency of staff. Tip: References a process for educating CNAs on how, what, when and to whom reporting changes in condition associated with trauma and/or PTSD.

	Emergency Responder Self-Care Plan	Being a resilient responder starts with a commitment to taking care of yourself. This can be increasingly difficult during a disaster or event, where responders experience additional stressors related to home and personal circumstances as well as those brought on by challenging mission demands.
Infectious Disease Outbreaks	CDC Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Serious Infections and Outbreaks Occurring in LTCFs	A wide range of infectious diseases and serious infections have been reported in LTC facilities. This resource will provide guidance and examples of how to respond and prepare for these infections.
	Alliant Quality Health Solutions Infection Control Resources	Alliant Health Solutions library of infection control resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interfacility Transfer Form • COVID 19 Resources • Immunization campaign resources
	Reducing Legionella Risk in a Healthcare Facility	This CMS guidance provides requirements to reduce Legionella risk in health care facility water systems to prevent cases and outbreaks of Legionnaires' Disease (LD)
	Outbreak Considerations for Long-Term Care Communities	This resource can be useful when managing seasonal and other infectious disease outbreaks within the facility and while preparing for the potential introduction of an infectious disease circulating in the surrounding community.
Weather-Related Disasters	ASPR Technical Resources by Disaster Topic	Resources and guides for specific topics and weather-related disasters.
	CMS Flooding and Severe Weather resources	CMS-specific resource for flooding or severe weather in connection with LTC facilities.
	Introduction to Heat Tabletop Planning and Coordination	The NOAA and NIHHIS created a collaborative planning tool that simulates emergency situations in an informal environment.
Climate Change and Resiliency	Federal Sustainability Plan	The President signed an executive order that will reduce emissions and tackle the climate crisis with five goals. These goals can be used in your facility to help reduce carbon footprint and reduce emissions.
	Primary Protection: Enhancing Health Care Resilience for a Changing Climate	Even though this toolkit has a hospital focus, there are pieces that nursing homes can utilize when aligning with the President's Climate Action Plan.
	Climate Essentials for Emergency Managers (July 2023)	FEMA created a guide to assist in better managing climate threats by enhancing the capability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to future climate conditions. This document offers foundational learning opportunities that can assist in efforts before, during and after disasters.
	Protecting Vulnerable Patient Populations from Climate Hazards: A Referral Guide for Health Professionals (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)	This resource is intended to inform education and referrals in clinical settings for patients who are vulnerable to climate change's health impacts, and can be used by health and human services providers to address climate-related threats to their clients' well-being.
	CDC Climate and Health Task Force Strategic Framework	The strategic framework was developed by the Task Force to guide the future of climate and health activities across CDC, and in coordination with partners, to increase the capacity to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the ongoing and emerging health impacts of climate change.

Cybersecurity	Cybersecurity in Healthcare	The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) published a guide in June 2024 with a comprehensive annex for health care and public health facilities.
	National Institute of Standards and Technology Cybersecurity Guidance	The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) updated its cybersecurity guidance for the health care industry in July 2022. The revised draft publication aims to help organizations comply with the HIPAA Security Rule and protect electronic protected health information (ePHI).
	AMA: Cybersecurity for the Clinician Courses	Cyberattacks on medical institutions have been on the rise, jeopardizing both patient care and administrative necessities. Learn the basics of cybersecurity and how to best protect yourself with these curated CME courses.
	Healthcare and Public Health Cybersecurity	ASPR worked with partners across the federal government and with industry to develop resources to help hospitals and health care facilities protect themselves and their patients from cyberattacks.
	Ready, Set, Go! Checklist - Cybersecurity for Providers	This Alliant Health Solutions resource will help your facility review or enhance your current cybersecurity plan/policies.
Staffing Plans	Guide for Emergency Staffing Plan for LTC Facilities	This tool is specific to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, having an emergency staffing plan or backup plan is important for LTC facilities during emergency situations.
	Minnesota Department of Health Staffing Plans and Templates and Trainings	Staffing trainings and resources related to this topic.
	Health Care Labor Action Preparation Checklist	Health care emergency planners and human resources (HR) personnel can use this checklist (developed with subject matter experts) to mitigate the effects of strikes and related labor actions on patients and staff.
Training Plans	California Association of Health Facilities Disaster Preparedness Exercises	California Association of Health Facilities Disaster Preparedness program includes drill resources, tabletop exercises, templates for documenting training exercises and other training resources.
	10 Minute Drills	This resource provides several short emergency preparedness scenarios and drills that can assist you with planning for your drills and exercises throughout the year.
	Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercises	Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) offers a comprehensive set of resources designed to assist in conducting facility exercises based on various physical security and cybersecurity topics.
Continuity of Operations	Emergency Plan for Continuing Operations for LTC Facilities: COOP Template	Continuity of operations (COOP) plan for emergency scenarios that result in an interruption in services and/or operations.
	Government Emergency Telecommunications Service Priority Telecommunications Services Enrollment/Management	The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) provides end-to-end communications priority via three services: Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS), Wireless Priority Service (WPS), and Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP).

Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN)	Community Organizations Active in Disaster	Material developed to bring resources together to increase the effectiveness of responses during disasters.
Access and Functional Needs	Special Needs Booklet	Preparing for an emergency can be a more difficult process if you have functional and access needs to address or are caring for someone with special needs. This booklet offers valuable tips on how to prepare for an emergency for those with access and functional needs.
	Emergency Preparedness: Caring for persons living with dementia in a long-term or community-based care setting	People receiving care or utilizing services in these settings are particularly vulnerable to complications due to their age and other concurrent medical conditions. Employees can be affected in emergency situations. Maintaining operations in long-term and community-based care settings with the expected staffing shortages during any pandemic, epidemic or disaster can be very challenging.
	Disaster Preparedness Guide for Older Adults	The Disaster Preparedness Guide for Older Adults is intended to support older adults and their caregivers. The guide provides easy-to-read, user-friendly worksheets that walk individuals and caregivers through a self-assessment to identify specific needs and checklists that create a personalized plan.
	Guidance for Integrating Culturally Diverse Communities into Planning for and Responding to Emergencies: A Toolkit	This reference guide offers summaries of key principles, practices and strategies for appropriately working with diverse communities.

State Emergency Preparedness Sites and Resource Links

AL	Emergency Management Agency	https://ema.alabama.gov/
	Alabama Nursing Home Association	https://www.anha.org/uploads/ANHALTCPRepToolkit.pdf
FL	Emergency Management Agency	https://www.floridadisaster.org/
	Florida Healthcare Association	Emergency Preparedness Florida Health Care Association (fhca.org)
GA	Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency	https://gema.georgia.gov/
KY	Emergency Management Agency	https://kyem.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx
LA	Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness	https://gohsep.la.gov/
	Baton Rouge Parish Emergency Preparedness	https://www.brla.gov/DocumentCenter/View/785/Nursing-Home-Model-Emergency-Plan-PDF
NC	Department of Public Safety- Emergency Management	https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/emergency-management
TN	TN Department of Health Emergency Preparedness	https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/cedep-emergency-preparedness.html

Note: Counties may also have specific plans.