

ASPR TRACIE Technical Assistance Request

Requestor: [REDACTED]
Requestor Phone: [REDACTED]
Requestor Email:
Request Receipt Date (by ASPR TRACIE): 24 October 2016
Response Date: 27 October 2016; updated 27 February 2018
Type of TTA Request: Standard

Request:

[REDACTED] requested technical assistance in researching communication plan templates to help her organization begin working on the new Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Emergency Preparedness (EP) Rule requirements.

Response:

The ASPR TRACIE Team researched several emergency planning resources related to communications. These materials are provided in the sections below and are categorized as follows: Plans, Tools, and Templates; Guidance Resources; and Other Resources.

The ASPR TRACIE Team also reviewed our Topic Collections, including the [Communication Systems Topic Collection](#). A list of other comprehensively developed Topic Collections can be found here: <https://asprtracie.hhs.gov/technical-resources/topic-collection>.

CMS-Specific Information:

CMS recently published the [interpretive guidelines](#) and the State Operations Manual that addresses specific regulatory expectations. This is posted on their website (under the Downloads section): <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertEmergPrep/Emergency-Prep-Rule.html>.

ASPR TRACIE has developed and collected a number of resources that we encourage you to use and believe will help facilitate compliance, including the resources provided here. However, this does not substitute review of the final rule text and interpretive guidelines. If you have specific questions about your facility's compliance please review the interpretive guidelines when they are developed, contact your state's survey agency, or the CMS Survey and Certification Group (SCG) at the following email address: SCGEmergencyPrep@cms.hhs.gov.

CMS and ASPR TRACIE are partnering to provide technical assistance, and share resources and promising practices to help affected providers and suppliers start or update the documents mandated by the new Emergency Preparedness rule. Additional key resources include:

- The ASPR TRACIE dedicated CMS Rule page: <https://asprtracie.hhs.gov/cmsrule>
- The entire CMS Emergency Preparedness Rule: <https://federalregister.gov/a/2016-21404>

- The CMS Emergency Preparedness Survey and Certification Page: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertEmergPrep/Emergency-Prep-Rule.html>
- CMS has [developed a Quick Glance Table of the rule requirements by provider type](#), to highlight key points of the new Emergency Preparedness rule. **NOTE:** This table is not meant to be an exhaustive list of requirements nor should it serve as a substitute for the regulatory text.
- ASPR TRACIE developed a [CMS Emergency Preparedness \(EP\) Rule Resources at Your Fingertips Document](#). Within this document are links to key resources:
 - CMS' developed [frequently asked questions \(FAQ\) documents](#) that synthesizes answers to commonly asked inquiries about the CMS EP Rule.
 - The FAQs, in combination with the CMS [at-a-glance chart](#) and [Provider and Supplier Type Definitions Fact Sheet](#), can help planners identify and address planning gaps and facilitate compliance with the regulations.
 - Interested in learning more about your local healthcare coalition? [This chart](#) can help you identify the preparedness office of your state public health agency. Remember: the release of the CMS EP Rule provides healthcare coalitions a tremendous opportunity to strengthen relationships and leverage a broader group of personnel and resources to provide for the medical needs of the whole community during a disaster.
 - If you missed any of the Medicare Learning Network National Call on the EP Rule, you can access the PowerPoint [slides, transcript, and audio recording here](#).

I. Plans, Tools, and Templates

Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program. (n.d.). [Public Safety Tools](#). (Accessed 2/27/2018.)

This website includes links to a variety of tools, resources, and courses geared towards first responder communications.

Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security. (2007). [Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan](#).

This state plan is in a standard template form that illustrates how most states organize themselves for communications across different levels of government, vocational fields, and into non-governmental organizations such as hospitals.

Pressman, H. (n.d.). [Free Tools for Communicating During Disasters and Emergencies](#). (Accessed 10/26/2016.) Central Coast Children's Foundation, Inc.

This resource list contains links to tools and apps for disaster communication with an emphasis on reaching people with communication challenges.

SAFECOM and Disaster Management. (n.d.). [Creating a Charter for a Multi-Agency Communications Interoperability Committee: Template and Questions to Consider](#). (Accessed 2/27/2018.) U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

This template--geared towards a local, regional level--can help planners create a charter for an interoperability committee or governance group. It is laid out as a sample charter and includes suggested headings for each section as well as potential issues/questions that should be addressed when developing a committee.

II. Guidance Resources

SAFECOM and the National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators. (2015). [Emergency Communications Governance Guide for State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Officials.](#)

This guidance document lays out governance challenges, best practices, and recommendations for emergency managers at all levels to use in assessing, establishing, and maintaining communications governance. The document includes on the government landscape; charters, bylaws, and memorandum of agreement; the key elements of a governance body; and components of inter and intrastate local governance bodies.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2013). [The Hospital Preparedness Program \(HPP\) Healthcare Preparedness Capability Review National Call. Capability 6: Information Sharing.](#)

This call summary describes the National Hospital Preparedness Program Information Sharing Capability. Participants highlight patient tracking systems, communications equipment interoperability, and other points outlined in this capability.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Healthcare and Public Health Sector Coordinating Councils. (n.d.). [Working Without Technology: How Hospitals and Healthcare Organizations Can Manage Communication Failure.](#) (Accessed 2/27/2018.)

This article discusses redundant lower-tech methods for communicating to ensure staff are able to stay in touch in case of a loss of technological capability.

III. Other Resources

Federal Emergency Management Agency, Incident Management Systems Integration Division. (2009). [Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Terms: A Capability Assurance Job Aid.](#)

Emergency planners can use the information contained in this guide to develop materials based on commonly-used abbreviations, acronyms, and terms.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2014). [National Emergency Communications Plan.](#)

This 5-year strategy document outlines the federal direction for getting the latest interoperable communication technology to all disaster response entities across the nation.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2015). [Government Emergency Telecommunications Service \(GETS\)](#).

The Government Emergency Telecommunications Service is a federal communications system meant to be used in an emergency or crisis situation when the landline network is congested and the likelihood of completing a call using traditional methods is reduced.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2015). [Telecommunications Service Priority \(TSP\)](#).

This federal program authorizes national security and emergency preparedness organizations to receive priority treatment for telecommunications services.