



TRACIE
HEALTHCARE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
INFORMATION GATEWAY

NEW HPP CAPABILITIES EMPHASIZE HEALTHCARE RESPONSE

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The Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) cooperative agreement is preparing to enter a new project period in summer 2017, to complement the newly-released 2017–2022 Health Care Preparedness and Response Capabilities. When it was originally launched in 2002, HPP concentrated on hospitals and emergency response. Over time, the focus shifted from hospital-based acute care to the importance of community-based planning and response activities, centered on the development of health care coalitions (HCCs). HCCs are groups of individual healthcare and response organizations, such as hospitals, EMS, public health agencies, emergency management, and others that have a stake in healthcare delivery in a geographic region. While individual HCC members are often competitive healthcare organizations with differing priorities and objectives, as a coalition they work together to ensure that each member has the necessary real-time information, medical equipment and supplies, communication systems, and healthcare personnel to respond to an emergency.

The new capabilities sharpen the focus of the HPP on acute healthcare service delivery and emphasize that preparedness and response are critical to ensuring the public's health during emergencies and disasters. The four capabilities were constructed in an additive fashion—in other words, the first capability, Foundation for Health Care and Medical Readiness, can help HCCs and their individual members develop the architecture, processes, and plans necessary to building an interdisciplinary, collaborative approach to emergency preparedness and response in order for the remaining capabilities to be effective. Ultimately, building the capabilities will enable HCCs and their members to save lives, reduce suffering, and ensure the public's health following sudden, no-notice or sustained disasters.

The four capabilities are:

- 1. Foundation for Health Care and Medical Readiness:** Includes the establishment of a sustainable HCC in each community, composed of members with strong relationships that can identify hazards and risks and prioritize and address gaps through planning, training, exercising, and managing resources. A critical component of this capability is the development of an HCC Preparedness Plan.

- 2. Health Care and Medical Response Coordination:** Emphasizes the importance of healthcare organizations and the HCC to share and analyze information, manage and share resources, and coordinate strategies to deliver medical care to all populations during emergencies and planned events. Built upon Capability 1, this capability includes developing an understanding of each HCC member's roles and responsibilities during a response and developing an HCC Response Plan.
- 3. Continuity of Health Care Service Delivery:** Helps ensure that healthcare organizations, with support from the HCC, provide uninterrupted, optimal medical care to all populations in the face of damaged or disabled healthcare infrastructure. In addition, this capability emphasizes the safety of responders and planning for simultaneous response and recovery operations.
- 4. Medical Surge:** Underscores the need for healthcare organizations to deliver timely and efficient care to their patients even when the demand for healthcare services exceeds available supply. This capability highlights the importance of having the HCC coordinate information and available resources for its members to better cope with the demands of an incident.

While HCCs will have different boundaries, relationships, and processes to suit their local needs, they should all have strong mechanisms to ensure information sharing, enhance situational awareness, monitor and assist with resource requests, and contribute to consistent strategy and information development as the incident requires. Through these functions, HCCs integrate the response partners so all entities are working toward common goals. Many HCC response activities will be virtual, and largely consist of information sharing. The larger the event, the more coordination activities may be necessary, particularly when an event lasts for days and is dynamic, or when it has widespread community impact.

HCCs create critical partnerships through which a wide range of planning activities can occur that increase the nation's capacity and capability to respond to disasters and emergencies. The new HPP capabilities encourage identification of gaps that HCC members can proactively address to enhance healthcare system resilience and preparedness, and emphasize the HCC's coordination role during a response. Effective coordination between the facilities, agencies, and disciplines can ensure that we get the right resources and information to the right place at the right time to provide timely and effective support to our communities' needs.

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Learn more about the 2017–2022 capabilities, how they have evolved over time, and what they mean for you. [Click here](#) to register for the ASPR TRACIE webinar on January 11, 2017, 2:30–3:30 ET.