

ASPR TRACIE Webinar

Play to Win: Healthcare and Public Health Preparedness for Mass Gatherings

Speaker Biographies

January 27, 2026

Welcome

Rachel Lehman

Acting Director, Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange (TRACIE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR)

Rachel Lehman is the Acting System Owner and Director for ASPR TRACIE. She previously served as an analyst in ASPR's Division of Critical Infrastructure Protection where she led communications, helped manage the Healthcare and Public Health Sector Partnership, and worked on all-hazards risk assessment for the healthcare sector. Prior to joining ASPR, she supported the U.S. Environmental Protection Agencies Office of Research and Development working on chemical risk assessment.

CAPT Samantha Spindel, Ph.D.

Acting Director, Office of Medical Reserve Corps, HHS ASPR

CAPT Spindel currently serves at the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) in Washington, D.C. in the Office of Medical Reserve Corps. The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is a national network of volunteers —medical and public health professionals and others—who prepare their communities for public health emergencies and disasters. The MRC network is composed of 268,000 volunteers organized into roughly 720 units nationwide.

CAPT Spindel commissioned as an Engineer in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps in 2009. She served at the Food and Drug Administration in Maryland and has experience working at the Center for Devices and Radiological Health in three Offices: Compliance and Enforcement, Science and Engineering Laboratories, and Communication and Education. In 2016, she became a supervisor at the Center for Tobacco Products where she oversaw a branch of engineers to review tobacco products and develop regulations, e.g. for e-cigarettes. CAPT Spindel began serving at ASPR in 2021. She served as the Deputy Director of the Office of Information

Management, Data, and Analytics. She also served as the Acting Supervisory Chief of Staff of the Office of Preparedness at ASPR.

CAPT Spindel graduated from Cornell University with a Bachelor of Science in Biological & Environmental Engineering and a Master of Engineering in Biomedical Engineering. She also received her Ph.D. in Bioengineering from the University of Maryland and holds a graduate certificate in Global Health and Global Health Engagement from The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

ASPR Opening Remarks:

CDR Shelsy Cannon, MS, BSN, RN

US Public Health Service, ASPR Regional Emergency Coordinator (REC) Region 3

Commander Shelsy Cannon began her career as an ICU nurse in 2008 and joined the United States Public Health Service in 2013. She has served with the Federal Bureau of Prisons and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and officially joined ASPR in 2020 after several years supporting regional response operations. CDR Cannon has supported major emergency and national security events. Her academic background includes a BA in Anthropology, a BSN, and an MS in Health Administration, and she is currently pursuing an MSN–Family Nurse Practitioner degree.

Moderator

John Hick, MD

Hennepin Healthcare and ASPR TRACIE

Dr. Hick is a faculty emergency physician at Hennepin Healthcare and a Professor of Emergency Medicine at the University of Minnesota Medical School. He serves as the Associate Medical Director for Hennepin County Emergency Medical Services and Medical Director for Emergency Preparedness at Hennepin Healthcare. He served the Minnesota Department of Health as the Medical Director for the Office of Emergency Preparedness from 2002-2014. He currently serves as the Senior Editor for ASPR's Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange. He is an expert on hospital preparedness and crisis medical care issues and has published over fifty peer-reviewed papers dealing with hospital preparedness for contaminated casualties, disaster standards of care, and surge capacity.

Panelists

Steven Hoeger

Director Corporate Emergency Management, University Health (Missouri)

Steven Hoeger has nearly four decades of experience in emergency medical services (EMS) and hospital safety and emergency management. For the past 15 years, Steve's focus has been centered on hospital safety and emergency management. Steve helped implement the Kansas Metro HCC when introduced by ASPR in 2012 and served as its coordinator until 2019 when he took a new position with University Health in Kansas City as the Corporate Director of Safety and Emergency Management.

Since 2019, Steve has also chaired the Mid-America Regional Council's (MARC) Healthcare Coalition. MARC is a key organization that supports regional cooperation and resource sharing in the Kansas City metropolitan area, encompassing nine counties across two states; promoting effective solutions for community issues. The HCC has been instrumental in coordinating the bi-state region's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and preparing for and responding to large scale events in Kansas City including three Super Bowl victory parades, the last one ending in a mass shooting event. Steve has been part of the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee since the early 2000's.

In addition to his professional achievements, Steve also serves as the Mayor of Platte City, Missouri. This provides Steve additional unique perspectives to serving the communities in our region. With a passion for service, a focus on healthcare, and active involvement in community and regional activities, Steve is committed to improving safety and health outcomes for all and fully believes we compete in healthcare everyday but when it comes to preparedness, it is not about competition but co-opitition!

Alexander Isakov, MD, MPH, FACEP, FAEMS

Executive Director, Health Security, Emory University, NETEC EMS Workgroup Co-Lead

Dr. Isakov is a professor of emergency medicine at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, where he is the Executive Director for Health Security. He is also the founding director for the Emory Section of Prehospital and Disaster Medicine whose faculty and staff provide medical oversight for 911 communications centers, first responder services, ground and air ambulances and mass gathering events in metro Atlanta. Dr. Isakov leads the EMS Biosafety Transport Consortium of the National Emerging Special Pathogens Training and Education Center (NETEC). He is the principal for the HHS Region 4 Disaster Health Response System (RDHRS) and he is the Host City Medical Lead for the 2026 World Cup Games in Atlanta.

Brooke A. Lawrence

Executive Director, Rhode Island Medical Reserve Corps & Training, Innovation & Leadership Institute (TILI)

Brooke A. Lawrence is the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Medical Reserve Corps (RI MRC) and the founder of the Training, Innovation & Leadership Institute (TILI), where he leads statewide preparedness and response initiatives. With over 25 years of experience in emergency management and public health operations, Brooke has overseen the deployment of over 2,400 MRC volunteers contributing more than 300,000 service hours across a wide range of missions, including mass vaccination, sheltering, and disaster response.

Brooke is nationally recognized for his expertise in mass gathering medicine, having led medical operations at some of Rhode Island's largest events—including music festivals, road races, and public health activations. He has served as Mission Commander for major federal deployments including Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Ike, and the World Trade Center response. Through TILI, Brooke has pioneered simulation-based training for law enforcement, EMS, public health, and frontline healthcare providers, fostering real-world readiness through immersive, interdisciplinary education.