

American Red Cross Sheltering Overview and the Public Health Nurse's Role



The New England Alliance for
Public Health Workforce
Development and the
Massachusetts Association of
Public Health Nurses
Webinar Series
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American Red Cross



Learning Objectives

- Upon Completion of this session you will be able to:
 - List steps involved in opening and staffing a shelter
 - Describe the nurse's initial and ongoing assessment roles in a shelter setting
 - List client symptoms, injuries, illnesses that may be seen in a shelter setting
 - Discuss the methods of caring for the health needs of the occupants of a shelter
 - Explain how public health concepts are integrated into the actions of American Red Cross Health Services



Types of Disasters

Natural

- Hurricanes
- Tornadoes
- Earthquakes
- Floods
- Wildfire
- Epidemics

Human-caused

- Residential fires
- Building collapses
- Transportation accidents
- Hazardous materials releases
- Domestic acts of terrorism

What is a shelter

- Short term housing
- A small community
- Located in churches, schools, stadiums, tent cities
- Where people eat, sleep, receive health services



Types of Shelters

- American Red Cross Shelters
- Partner Organizations
- Local Town Run Shelters
- Special Needs Shelters – those facilities that in non-disaster times would require licensure to operate
- Co-sheltering
- Decontamination Shelters
- Shelter in Place





Opening and Staffing a Shelter

- To open a shelter the facility must have running clean water, electricity and communications
- The staff will consist of:
 - Shelter Manager
 - Two to Three Shift Managers
 - Disaster Health Nurse
 - Disaster Mental Health
 - Shelter Workers
- The shelter staff must wear identification (ID) and the shelter client must also wear ID.
- Volunteer Client Workers

Shelter Registration

- Registration Form
- Initial Intake and Assessment Tool
- Partnership between Red Cross & HHS



AMERICAN RED CROSS
SHELTER REGISTRATION FORM

Family Name (Last, First, Middle Initial) _____
Full Name (Last, First, Middle Initial) _____
Home Phone _____
Cell Phone Number _____
E-mail Address _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Country _____
Date of Birth _____
Sex _____
Race _____
Ethnicity _____
Religion _____
Marital Status _____
Occupation _____
Education _____
Language _____
Special Needs _____
Medical Conditions _____
Allergies _____
Current Medication _____
Insurance _____
Other _____

Signature _____
Date _____



Registration form with highlighted sections in yellow, including fields for name, address, and contact information.



Role of the Disaster Health Nurse in a Shelter Setting - Initial Assessment

- Determine the Health Needs of shelter occupants:
 - Serious ill or injured
 - Treat minor illnesses and injuries
 - Look for unreported health problems
 - Arrange for replacement of lost prescriptions and other medical items
- Identify any communicable disease - isolate and report them to the Local Public Health

Role of the Disaster Health Nurse in a Shelter Setting – Ongoing Assessment

- Arrange for health care for:
 - Infants
 - Pregnant or postpartum Woman
 - Elderly
 - Persons with disabilities



Role of the Disaster Health Nurse in a Shelter Setting - Ongoing Assessment (cont.)

- Determine any dietary needs
- Prevent any pre-existing medical conditions from getting worse
- Establish a relationship with local health care agencies including Public Health
- Refer persons to Disaster Mental Health or community resources as necessary
- Establish communications with other health care providers
- Follow up on care provided by referrals

Role of the Disaster Health Nurse in a Shelter Setting Ongoing (cont.)

- The close living conditions of a shelter increase the risk for communicable diseases
- Infection control is a top priority in shelters
- Personal hygiene is effective in the control of disease outbreak
- Encourage frequent hand washing
- Provide alcohol based antiseptic hand sanitizers
- Set up showering schedules
- Distribute comfort kits
- Provide a specific area for diaper changing and disposal
- Educate all shelter clients on the importance of daily hygiene

Role of the Disaster Health Nurse in a Shelter Setting Ongoing (cont.)

- Arrange for Inspections with Public Health
 - Food services
 - Food storage
 - Food preparation
 - Restroom
- Insure sanitary conditions are maintained in the shelter

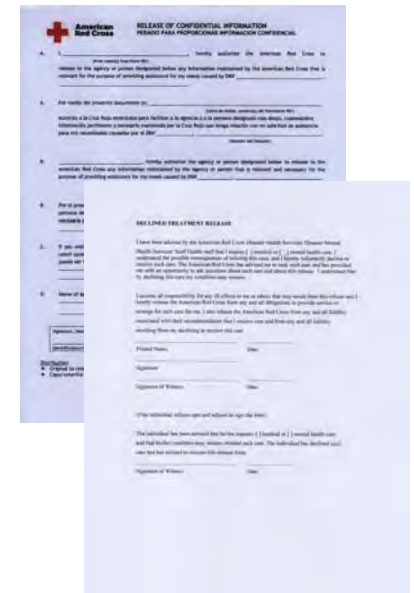


Role of the Disaster Health Nurse in a Shelter Setting Ongoing (cont.)

- Insure the security of medical supplies
- 24 hour coverage
- Maintain documentation and reports
 - Client health record
 - CDC Morbidity / Mortality Report
 - Release of confidential information
 - Declined treatment



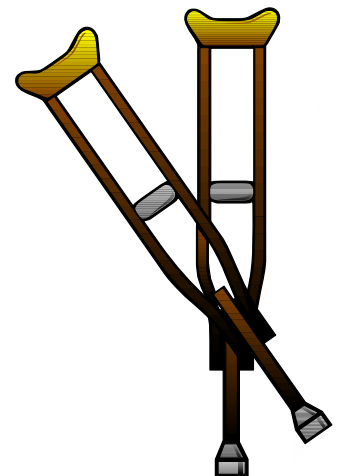
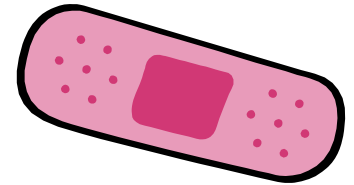
The image shows two CDC forms. The top one is the 'Disaster Health Services Mortality Report Form' and the bottom one is the 'Disaster Health Services Morbidity Report Form'. Both forms include sections for patient information, medical history, and a detailed list of symptoms and conditions to be reported.



The image shows a 'RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION' form. It contains several sections for the patient to sign, including a general release, a specific release for the health nurse, and a section for declining treatment. The form includes fields for the patient's name, date, and signature.

What We See

- Sudden onset of injuries and illnesses
- Bone, muscle, and joint injuries
- Respiratory distress
- Lacerations and puncture wounds
- Exposure to extreme weather conditions
- Rashes
- Burns



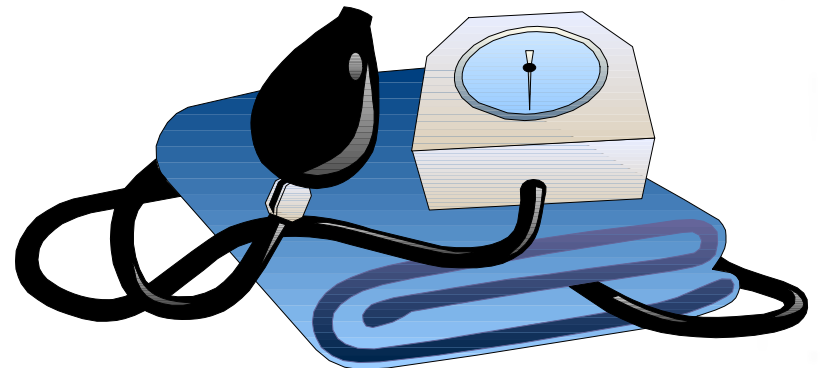
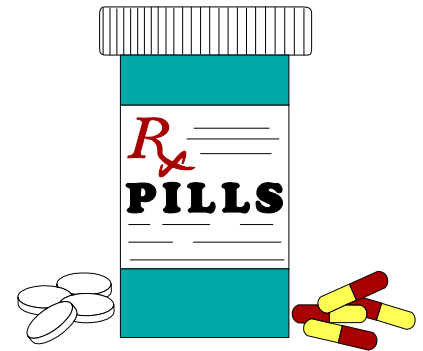


What We See (cont.)

- Stress-related Symptoms
 - Fluctuation in normal vital signs
 - Gastrointestinal upset
 - Headache
 - Pregnancy - Labor can begin earlier than expected
 - Irritability
 - Exhaustion
 - Malaise
 - Symptoms may vary

What We See (cont.)

- Aggravation of health conditions
 - Hypertension
 - Cardiac problems
 - Respiratory problems (e.g. asthma)
 - Gastrointestinal problems
 - Diabetes
 - Allergies





How Do We Deal With “What We See”

- As with all life threatening emergencies (Heart Attacks, Strokes, etc.) we activate the 911 System.
- For other sicknesses or injuries we follow the guidelines listed in the ARC Health Services Protocols Handbook
- The guidelines provide for offering the client Over The Counter (OTC) medications (acetaminophen, ibuprofen, antibiotic ointment, etc.)
- The key question to ask is: “What do you normally do or take when you are home or when you have these symptoms”
- Any time these medications are passed out the information must be logged in the Client’s Health Record

How Do We Deal With “What We See” (cont.)

- We work with the client’s physician, pharmacy, and Homeland Security to replace lost prescriptions
- Replace essential eyeglasses, prosthetic devices, hearing aids and other equipment lost as a result of the disaster
- Provide referrals to Local Public Health clinics and community agencies

Dealing with Client Incidents

- Unexpected events
- Injuries or deaths
- Threats to one's personal safety
- Intentional acts of violence / criminal events



Summary

- This session familiarized you with shelters
- Steps to open a shelter
- The role of a Health Services Nurse in a shelter
- Shelter sanitation and personal hygiene
- Special needs population
- For more information go to: americanredcross.org
- Sign up at the local Red Cross Chapter and take a Sheltering and Health Service Response course.

THANK YOU !

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