

# Community Planning Framework for Healthcare Preparedness



A major concern for the healthcare community during a wide-scale, natural disaster or an infectious disease incident is patient care. However, emergency situations such as these require advance planning for medical surge—the ability to provide adequate medical evaluation and care during events that exceed the limits of the normal medical infrastructure of an affected community. Medical surge encompasses the ability of the healthcare system to survive the impact of a hazard and maintain or rapidly recover operations that were compromised.

In 2008, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Healthcare Preparedness Activity (HPA) in partnership with the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) began work with communities around the United States to help them improve their healthcare preparedness and delivery during an influenza pandemic or other public health emergency. These collaborative community efforts involved representatives from healthcare agencies and organizations, public health departments, emergency management agencies, and community support organizations.

From this work, CDC has observed that many local communities, regions, and states have invested significant time, funds, and resources towards planning for medical surge. However, events like the 2009 influenza A/H1N1 pandemic have demonstrated that plans for medical surge can be strengthened to consider unanticipated stresses to community healthcare providers, better coordinate hospital and outpatient providers with public health and emergency management, and engage other community partners in future planning. This Community Planning Framework (hereafter referred to as the Framework) is designed to provide community planners with a tool to enhance existing community plans for medical surge or to develop new plans from the beginning.