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Edition 53—December 2012



# MRC ★ In Touch

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## Featured Article

### Prince George's County MRC Serves Homeless Veterans

On November 3, the Prince George's County Medical Reserve Corps participated in the annual Veterans Stand Down and Homeless Resource Day, a 6-hour event that provided one-stop services to over 300 homeless veterans, veterans at-risk of homelessness, and their families, across the state of Maryland. The event offered free flu vaccinations, and medical and dental services. In addition to these health services, the event brought together more than 100 public, private, non-profit, and faith community partners to provide these individuals with the tools to sign up for additional services such as VA benefits, Maryland state ID cards, employment assistance, and housing relocation information.

The Prince George's County Health Department recruited 26 MRC volunteers to serve as dental hygienists, nurses, and administrators. Most MRC volunteers served as navigators to accompany attendees individually so they went to all available resources and did not get lost or discouraged. With assistance from the MRC, the Prince George's County Health Department vaccinated 113 individuals that day.

This event was critical for ensuring the health of all county residents. Since homeless individuals are rarely insured, they often do not seek prevention or early intervention treatment when they fall ill. They are particularly vulnerable to the spread of airborne pathogens like the influenza virus after extended exposure to extreme temperatures and congregate shelter living. Providing the homeless attendees with a wide range of preventive and direct services reduces the number of unvaccinated individuals who could potentially transmit the influenza and other viruses across populations.

There were some challenges hosting the event due to Hurricane Sandy since the volunteer community shifted to focus on Sandy response efforts. Additionally, the MRC volunteers had to forgo the scheduled training set up by the Department of Social Services as a result of Sandy, and relied on only one day-of training. However, hundreds of volunteers turned out to help with the Veterans Stand Down and Homeless Resource Day, and the event was a success.

## MRC/NACCHO Connections



### **New White Paper: “Protecting Americans in the 21st Century: Priorities for 2012 and Beyond”**

As a member of the National Homeland Security Consortium, NACCHO joins 21 other organizations calling on government and private sector leaders to address the complex and interdependent issues facing our nation today. The white paper, "Protecting Americans in the 21st Century: Priorities for 2012 and Beyond," highlights current emerging threats, including climate change, violent extremist ideologies, and catastrophic cascading consequences. This document emphasizes the developing hazards that the public faces, and calls for collaboration among a variety of sectors to best serve the safety, security, and health of our communities.

MRC units will benefit from the outline of major threats and can see the areas where their resources are best served based on the hazards addressed in this document. While many of the risks are global in nature, assessing their impacts from a broad perspective can allow MRC units to understand how such occurrences would influence their service in local communities. Read the [white paper](#).

## Announcements



### **MRC Promotional Videos Now Available**

NACCHO has developed two videos to spread the word about the work of the MRC in communities across the country! The first video is a short promotion that can be used to recruit volunteers and is suitable for local TV networks. The second video is a longer overview about the scope of the MRC's volunteer activities and is great to share with your community's political and business leaders, partners, and stakeholders.

Link to [one minute PSA](#).

Link to [five minute infomercial](#).

### **Public Health Preparedness Summit 2013**

Join us for another exciting summit March 12 – 15! The 2013 Public Health Preparedness Summit will take place in Atlanta, and will offer a strategic overview on the current state of public health preparedness. Register now for early bird savings at [www.phprep.org](http://www.phprep.org).

## Free Volunteer Management Tools Available

Volunteer management tools are available for free at [apc.naccho.org](http://apc.naccho.org). These products were developed by the Advanced Practice Centers, eight local health departments leading in public health preparedness who developed resources for use by other field practitioners throughout the country. Link to [volunteer management resources](#).

To submit information for either MRC: In Touch or MRC: In Focus, please contact Alyson Jordan at [ajordan@naccho.org](mailto:ajordan@naccho.org) or (202) 783-5528.



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