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## Featured Article

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### Maryland Responds MRC Pharmacy Volunteers Play Critical Role in SNS Exercise

Nineteen Maryland Responds MRC pharmacy volunteers played a critical role in the success of the 2013 Maryland Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Operations exercise, Sept. 23-26, 2013. Objectives of this exercise were to receive orders from across the state to pick, package, and distribute medical material resources and countermeasures. A total of 108 partnering organizations were involved in the exercise, including 45 hospitals/acute care facilities, 24 local health departments, 15 state agencies, 12 state facilities, six law enforcement agencies, three military partners, and three federal agencies.

The pharmacy volunteers were key to the success of the receipt, stage, and store (RSS) operations and demonstrated commitment to their support role. They also used their previously prepared just-in-time training as a cornerstone of their engagement within the RSS incident command structure. The pharmacy volunteers performed assigned tasks without failure or challenge.

The pharmacy volunteer credentials were verified in real time, and one of the strengths of the exercise was the supportive role played by the Board of Pharmacy executive committee, commissioners, and the Board's emergency preparedness taskforce members. This involvement was noted in the after action report which stated, "This is the first time such a supportive and integrated role by a Maryland professional board has been documented and recognized. Certainly, this involvement and participation should be encouraged and continued."

Learn more about the role of pharmacists can play within public health and emergency response within the MRC:

- [Pharmacists Bolster Local Health Department Efforts through the Medical Reserve Corps](#)
- [Building and Sustaining Partnerships between Pharmacies and Health Departments at State and Local Levels](#)
- [Exercise Illustrates Role of Small, Independent Pharmacies in Emergency Response](#)

## MRC/NACCHO Connections

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### Sign Up Now: Pilot Testing for MRC Connect

Sign up now to be a pilot tester for [MRC Connect](#), NACCHO's new web- and mobile-based application for the MRC! Before MRC Connect launches in late July, NACCHO needs pilot testers to try out the application. Your feedback will help us detect any issues and identify the best uses of MRC Connect before it is open to the entire MRC network.

The pilot testing period will begin on Monday, June 23 and will conclude on Monday, July 7. During this time, pilot testers will have exclusive access to the latest version of MRC Connect, and will be expected to test out all aspects of the application. After testing the entire application, pilot testers will submit feedback to NACCHO by filling out a survey that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

The first 25 people to submit [this form](#) with an interest in pilot testing will receive a unique account on MRC Connect to pilot test the application. MRC unit leaders who have unit activities scheduled during this time will be given preference so that they may test out MRC Connect during a real-world activity. While MRC Connect is not just for smartphone users, [pilot testing is only open to users with smartphones](#) so that any issues can be detected

on both the web and mobile versions. Pilot testing for MRC Connect is only open to current MRC unit leaders. If you have any questions about MRC Connect or pilot testing, please email [mrc@naccho.org](mailto:mrc@naccho.org).

### **Learn More about MRC Connect**

On July 22, NACCHO will host a webinar for the entire MRC network featuring a demonstration of MRC Connect and details about the launch. Registration details will follow, and NACCHO will make a recording of this webinar available for those who cannot view the event live.

Discover how MRC Connect will fit into the suite of other public health preparedness applications during the webinar, "[The Use of Mobile Technology in Local Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response](#)" on June 20 at 2:00PM EDT. This webinar will feature George Elfond and Mykhaylo Kostandov, co-founders of Rallyware, the company developing MRC Connect.

## **Announcements**

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### **NACCHO's 2014 Summer Preparedness Webinar Series**

NACCHO will be hosting a 2014 Summer Preparedness Webinar Series highlighting topics in preparedness and emergency management. To start the series off, the first webinar will explore how local health departments utilize closed Points of Dispensing (PODs) to improve emergency planning for vulnerable populations. Other scheduled webinars will look at topics regarding the use of mobile technology in preparedness and emergency management, as well as how to use the Electronic Death Registration Systems for active disaster response and surveillance. The current 2014 Summer Preparedness Webinar Series schedule follows:

- [Improved Planning for Vulnerable Populations through the Use of Closed PODs](#)– Thursday, June 5, 2:30–4:00PM EDT
- [The Use of Mobile Technology in Local Health Preparedness and Emergency Response](#)– Friday, June 20, 2:00–3:00PM EDT
- [Using Electronic Death Registration Systems to Conduct “Real-Time” Disaster Mortality Surveillance](#)– Wednesday, September 17, 2:00–3:30PM EDT

As the summer continues, NACCHO will add more webinars around biosurveillance, informatics, as well as many others, so please continue to check NACCHO's [Preparedness Brief Blog](#) for updates. Space for the webinars is limited; register now!

### **Early Bird Registration Deadline for NACCHO Annual 2014 is Today!**

Early bird registration for NACCHO Annual 2014 closes tonight, June 5, at 11:59PM EDT! [NACCHO Annual 2014](#) is the largest gathering of local public health officials in the United States, and this year will take place July 8-10 in Atlanta. NACCHO Annual 2014 will provide an interactive setting for local health officials and their public health partners from around the country to examine strategies, share ideas, and plan actions for sustaining or reinventing their organizations in the new era. [Register now](#) to take advantage of early bird savings!

### **Interactive Podcasts Now Available on NACCHO University**

Couldn't make it to the 2014 Preparedness Summit in Atlanta? Several presenters share their insights in these [new interactive podcasts](#) now available on NACCHO University. Podcasts feature Summit speakers from a variety of topic areas, including the role of MRC volunteers in preparedness activities.

[NACCHO University](#) is a new learning platform offering professional development resources to assist local public health professionals develop their knowledge and competencies while advancing their careers. And now, NACCHO University is connected seamlessly to [MRC-TRAIN](#), the learning management system provided by the DCVMRC to all MRC units, offering access to even more professional development opportunities.

Accessing NACCHO University courses from MRC-TRAIN is easy and direct. Login to your MRC-TRAIN account and use the search option to find the desired course. Once you have located the course, select the registration tab on the course details screen and click “Launch.” You will be automatically logged in and taken to the course on NACCHO University. Upon completing the course and any assessment, you will be returned to MRC-TRAIN and your transcript will be updated within the course completion record.

Visit [NACCHO University](#) today to view these interactive podcasts and more public health courses!

### **Funding Opportunity for the Development of Radiation Response Volunteer Corps**

The Conference of Radiation Control Directors invites proposals for the development of a Radiation Response Volunteer Corps. This funding opportunity promotes the development of self-sustaining volunteer emergency

response programs that include volunteer radiation protection professionals and a volunteer registry of those individuals for use in radiation emergencies within the states, primarily for population monitoring and shelter needs. MRC units provide an existing infrastructure for such a program, and MRC volunteers can provide valuable assistance during a radiation emergency. Proposals are accepted on an ongoing basis; visit the [Conference of Radiation Control Directors' website](#) for more details.



The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice for local public health departments.

1100 17th St, NW, 7th Floor Washington, DC 20036

P 202-783-5550 F 202-783-1583

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Please contact Alyson Jordan, NACCHO's MRC Communications Specialist, with any questions or suggestions for the newsletter at 202-783-5528 or at [ajordan@naccho.org](mailto:ajordan@naccho.org).