



MRC In Touch

Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities

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www.medicalreservecorps.gov

Featured Article

MRC Units Get Ahead of Flu Season

Flu season begins in early October and lasts through May. 'Flu' is colloquially thought of as "a cold" or being "under the weather," but while influenza can be mild, it can also cause severe disease and even death. A flu vaccine is the best way to protect against the flu. In 2013, the CDC reported that the flu vaccine kept nearly 80,000 people all over the hospital. Through the beginning months of this year's flu season, MRC units have been busy preparing their communities for the virus.

MRC units from New Hampshire to California participated in flu preparation activities. The Ashland-Boyd County MRC (KY) partnered with a local middle school to distribute flu vaccination educational materials to students and their parents. The Dutchess County MRC (NY) volunteers participated in a training session to review their knowledge and injection skills in advance of the peak flu season.

Countless other units participated in flu clinics in their communities. The Santa Barbara MRC (CA), along with other units in the state, participated in a mass flu vaccination clinic in December. The event doubled as a POD exercise. The Hampden-Wilbraham MRC (MA) provided flu shots atflu a local senior center, a population that is typically hit hardest by the uptick in seasonal flu. The Orange County MRC (NC) partnered with government employees to provide free vaccinations.

These volunteers know how the flu can affect the health of their communities. They work with their local health departments and other partners to make sure they're doing all they can to protect their neighbors. The units stayed busy planning clinics, refreshing their skills, and sharing educational material about the importance of the flu vaccine. Thousands of people wouldn't be armed against the flu without the work of these volunteers!

MRC/NACCHO Connections

2015-2016 MRC Award Applications Now Open

Applications for the 2015-2016 MRC Challenge Awards are now open. Applications will remain open until 11:55pm EST, February 2, 2016. Before completing your application, make sure to review the [Request for Applications](#), which has helpful examples of past winners, and preview the [application questions](#).

There are four focus areas for the 2015-2016 MRC Challenge Awards and units can only submit a proposal for one of the focus areas. The focus areas are:

- Community Resiliency
- Chronic Disease Prevention
- Partners for Empowered Communities
- Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

The MRC Awards website has [learning resources](#) and [frequently asked questions](#) available for unit leaders as they navigate the award process.

As a reminder, all units must have updated their profile on www.medicalreservecorps.gov by December 31, 2015 to be eligible for the awards.

We look forward to seeing the creative ways MRC units want to improve the health of their communities. Stay tuned to the MRC listserv for additional information and reminders. If you have additional questions, contact NACCHO at mrc@naccho.org.

Announcements

Core Disaster Life Support (eCDLS) Available Online through MRC TRAIN

MRC TRAIN (www.mrc.train.org), part of the larger TRAIN learning network, is constantly working with organizations to connect their content and resources to the platform. By having training listed on MRC TRAIN, not only is it more accessible in a single location for MRC volunteers, but it also allows training transcripts to accurately reflect complete training records, with courses offered locally, regionally, and nationally existing side by side.

MRC is pleased to announce the availability of the online version of Core Disaster Life Support (eCDLS) from the National Disaster Life Support Foundation (NDLSF) on MRC TRAIN. By working together, the NDLSF and the MRC Program are able to offer this course to MRC volunteers at no cost (normally the course is \$15.00). Register today at <http://bit.ly/eCDLS>.

Stay tuned for future offerings to be made available!

Institute for Wellness Education Provides Scholarship Opportunity for Unit Leaders

The Institute for Wellness Education (IWE) is offering special scholarships and discounts to MRC units for their introductory course, *Take Charge of Your Life: Be well to Do Well*. The course's strategies are part of the US National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices and the focus of IWE's wellness coach training.

IWE's mission is to make health and wellness the norm in communities across the nation by training community-based professionals with science-based strategies so they can help people live longer, healthier, and happier lives.

With this competency-based course, you will walk away with the skills and confidence to put powerful strategies into immediate use. Plus, this certification is a way to expand your current professional services or a great first step if you're looking for a new career as a wellness coach.

The 36- to 50-hour course is online and self-paced; and it features a hands-on, learn-by-doing format. Take Charge of Your Life: Be Well to Do Well is approved for up to 50 hours of continuing education credits for nurses, psychologists, social workers, and counselors; NASM approved for 1.9 CEUs. Students may also earn 3 college credits in nutrition.

Learn more and apply now: <https://www.instituteforwellness.com/mrcscholarships/>. The deadline to apply is January 11, 2016 for the January 18, 2016 course. For more information email Deborah Teplow at dteplow@instituteforwellness.com.

New MRC Core Competencies QuickSeries Guide Available

We are thrilled to announce that the new MRC Volunteer Core Competencies QuickSeries guide is now available to order. This new guide specifically addresses the baseline skills and knowledge required of all MRC volunteers, regardless of their role within the MRC unit.

In addition to providing essential information on MRC's Core Competencies through the MRC Learning Paths – Volunteer Preparedness, Response, Leadership and Support for Community Resiliency – the guide is equipped with a volunteer self-assessment checklist, training resources and a section for personal notes. An excellent tool for all MRC volunteers!

Visit quickseries.com/MRC for more details or contact your local representative to get your FREE sample

MRC Featured in Preparedness Brief Blog Post

In light of the recent events in Paris and San Bernardino, CA, active shooter and terrorism situations have dominated global media and the minds of many Americans. Preparing for and recovering from these incidents is

typically seen as the job of local and Federal law enforcement, but local public health is deeply involved in the response and can take a larger role in terrorism preparedness in the future, especially as violence is increasingly seen as a public health issue.

Jennifer Ulman from the Colorado Acupuncture MRC shared her experience after responding to the Planned Parenthood shooting in November 2015. Visit the [Preparedness Brief Blog](#) to learn more about their experience.



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

1201 Eye Street, NW, 4th Floor Washington, DC 20005

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.