



MRC In Touch

Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities

May 2018

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Featured Article

Lean on Me Project Serves Vulnerable Population for Disaster Preparedness Awareness

The *Lean on Me* project was born from the observations of Okaloosa-Walton MRC (OWMRC) member Peggy McDeavitt during one of Florida's very active hurricane seasons. She witnessed first-hand that the elderly population in her neighborhood did not have a viable disaster plan. She felt that, with help from other volunteers in the OWMRC, a project could be developed to perform community outreach to the elderly population and other vulnerable populations in their community.

Although the annual hurricane season is the force that drives preparedness activities for the Okaloosa Walton community, the OWMRC recognizes there are many other potential disasters that could impact the elderly and vulnerable populations. The community has been impacted by freezing temperatures accompanied by snow and ice storms that can temporarily isolate these community members. There are also major transportation corridors through the area that pose the risk of hazardous materials accidents, flood concerns from the many river systems in the counties, as well as a major military base.

The OWMRC was awarded a 2017 MRC Challenge Award for their *Lean on Me* project to develop local preparedness materials that address some of the region's unique disasters. These materials, along with information from state and federal response agencies, were combined into a comprehensive client resource book. Volunteers provide the book during a visit performed in the person's home, or at a senior center or meeting place. Volunteers perform a hazard risk assessment, looking for fire hazards or mobility problems. If there are issues, *Lean on Me* volunteers assist by preparing specific disaster plans developed by the volunteers based on the client's health acuity and identify resources available to help the client. The visit ends with clients receiving a NOAA Weather Radio, small first-aid kit, and a file box to gather and store important paperwork and resource lists. The visits are recorded in a database for planning and as a resource to coordinate with these clients in the event of a disaster response.

To date, the project has directly served 51 people, with 15 MRC volunteers contributing 2400 hours of service. Through the project they have partnered with local faith-based organizations to provide the training, curriculum, and materials for congregation member providing them with resources and information to prepare for both natural or man-made disasters. By preparing elderly and vulnerable populations for disasters, the *Lean on Me* project has helped strengthen the whole community by reducing the burden on first responder services to the community during disasters. The clients served have stated that they feel better prepared, have an increased sense of resiliency, and have remained in contact with the MRC volunteers.

The OWMRC was on "alert" during Hurricane Irma and Nate and had an opportunity to test their database and response plan. The volunteer coordinator used the client database and called those most at risk to ensure they were ready to execute their plan should the weather get worse. Based on this experience, the plan has been updated to have the volunteer coordinator work in the EOC to maintain contact with the clients before, during, and after a storm.

The OWMRC Unit Leader will be presenting an overview of the *Lean on Me* project at the 2018 Healthy Aging Summit in Washington, DC, in July..

MRC/NACCHO Connection

Apply for the 2018 National Health Security Award

Apply for the 2018 National Health Security Award

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and the [Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response](#) (ASPR) are pleased to announce the third annual *National Health Security Award!* This award recognizes health departments that have demonstrated significant accomplishments in implementing health security-related initiatives within their jurisdictions. [Applications will be accepted now through June 1, 2018.](#) Awardees will be featured in NACCHO's publications and receive a scholarship to NACCHO Annual. [Read more...](#)

Leading Adaptive Change: Mobilizing Teams to Thrive

Changes in the public health system necessitate a new kind of leadership –a transition from our typical spheres of influence and authority to mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive. Adaptive Leadership is a training offering you can bring to your organization that can give you the tools to navigate change in challenging environments. Join speakers Tahlia Gousse from the National Association of County and City Health Officials and Michael Melton from Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to learn more about Adaptive Leadership and its applications' potential value in more effectively tackling the challenges faced by your organization.

Date: Monday, May 21, 2018

Program: 2:00 p.m. –3:00 p.m. ET

*Register: <https://www.pathlms.com/naccho/webinars/3632>

More information: consulting@naccho.org

*You must have a NACCHO login to register for this webinar. Creating an account is easy and free!

Legionella: Exploring National Guidance and Local Experiences

Wednesday, May 30, 2018, 1:00PM – 2:00PM EDT

Legionnaires' disease is a respiratory disease caused by *Legionella* bacteria, which can be found in the water systems of large buildings. In 2016, there were an estimated 6,100 cases of Legionnaires' disease in the United States. NACCHO invites you to learn more about *Legionella* and the available resources and recommendations for protecting your community. Participants will hear from CDC subject matter experts with the National Center for Environmental Health and the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases about tools and resources available to local and state partners. In addition, attendees will hear from local health department staff from Gwinnett, Newton, and Rockdale County Health Departments regarding their experience with and lessons learned from responding to an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease. For more information, please refer to the attached flyer.

Register [here](#) to attend.

Announcements

MIT Solve Challenges: Frontlines of Health + Coastal Communities

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology is CrowdSourcing the globe for innovations to solve global challenges. Current challenges accepting solutions include the [Frontlines of Health](#) (*How can communities invest in frontline health workers and services to improve their access to effective and affordable care?*) and [Coastal Communities](#) (*How can coastal communities mitigate and adapt to climate change while developing and prospering?*). Solutions should be optimistic, innovative, human-centered, include technology, and with opportunities for industry partnerships.

Solutions will be judged by experts and industry leaders. Finalists will be invited to a live pitch event where the most promising solutions are selected to make up that year's Solver class. As a Solver, you become a member of Solve's community where staff help match-make between the Solver class and leaders from the tech industry, business, philanthropy, government and civil society who are seeking partnerships and opportunities to implement innovative, scalable ideas.

[Learn more about how Solve Challenges work.](#)

Deadline to Submit – July 1, 2018

Select ASPR Preparedness Summit Presentations

Each year, [ASPR](#) staff have the opportunity to share their work and exchange information with stakeholders at the [Preparedness Summit](#). These presentations were made in 2018, when the theme was "Strengthening National Health Security: Mastering Ordinary Responses, Building Resilience for Extraordinary Events." Access [these four](#)

[fact sheets](#) to learn more about how ASPR is working to save lives and protect Americans from 21st century health security threats.

2018 Presentations

- [Addressing Health Security Gaps in the United States following the Joint External Evaluation](#)
- [ASPR Priorities for Building Readiness for 21st Century Threats](#)
- [Blindfolded and Pedaling Backwards Through Wind, Rain, and Rising Waters: Medical Reserve Corps Activations During the Catastrophic 2017 Hurricane Season](#)
- [Resources to Help Build Resilience for the Expected and Unexpected](#)
- [The Best Disaster Literature of 2016](#)
- [Strengthening Health Security: Visions for a Prepared and Resilient Nation](#)
- [A Valuable Resource Right in Your Backyard: How Healthcare Coalitions are Collaborating with Local Volunteers](#)

NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

www.naccho.org



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.