



# MRC In Touch

Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities

November 26, 2018

[www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov)

## Featured Article

### Mass Shootings as a Public Health Crisis

Gun violence is a profound public health crisis in America. Over the course of two weeks, two separate shooters—one in Pittsburgh, Pa., and another in Thousand Oaks, California, the 307<sup>th</sup> mass shooting in 2018 - took 22 lives. As our country moves through emotions of sadness, anger, and frustration at yet another senseless act of violence, MRC units across the country are training and exercising their volunteers to respond to active shooter incidents.



**[LeFlore Regional MRC Implements Mass Fatality Training:](#)** The LeFlore, Oklahoma Regional Medical Reserve Corps used their 2016 NACCHO Challenge Award to implement mass fatality incident support and traumatic grief counseling regional response teams. The teams were designed to be able to respond to mass fatality incidents anywhere in the state of Oklahoma. The MRC unit created the field response teams and the family assistance center for operational set-up and delivery.

Through the 2016 Challenge Awards, the San Bernardino (CA) MRC and Montgomery County (OH) MRC units also held active shooter incident trainings. San Bernardino MRC held a 250-person event supported by 45 MRC volunteers to provide active shooter awareness while incorporating speakers from the community involved with the December 2015 shooting. Montgomery County MRC focused on mental health needs during response by conducting pre- and post-incident assessments of training effectiveness and perception of their response to traumatic events. The assessments helped them understand the need for mental health and psychological first aid courses in helping volunteers recognize mental health trauma and administer self-care for themselves during a response.

In 2017, the TriCounty Health (UT) MRC received a Challenge Award to develop active shooter trainings. As a result, the unit identified the following: ***"Many people do not know how to handle an active shooter situation. We need more people trained in active shooter intervention, to help prevent or save multiple lives including our own. With the rise of active shootings around the world, it is a important topic to talk openly about and be trained to know what to do and what options you have."***

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## MRC/NACCHO Connection

### MRC Resource of the Month

#### Engaging Local Businesses and Organizations

The MRC November Resource of the Month is the Uncas Health District's [Virtual Operations Support Team Handbook and Policies/Procedure document](#). Created by Eastern Connecticut (Region 4) Virtual Operations Support Team, it serves as a resource to local and state entities in Connecticut. It does not supersede or replace any organization's existing communications plans or methodologies, but rather supplements it.

The Eastern Connecticut Virtual Operations Support Team is managed by the Uncas Health District with support from other state and local partners. The Epicenter Media and Training of Rochester, N.Y., also made significant contributions to the handbook. It aims to harness new technologies and social media tools to support sale agencies and local communities across the State of Connecticut in emergency response. The team is also available to support missions such as staging at mass gatherings.

## Why Participating in the 2019 Preparedness Summit is an Investment in Your Agency and Community

Registration is now open for the 2019 Preparedness Summit! **Save \$100 by registering before February 8, 2019.** The summit will take place March 26-29, 2019 at America's Center Convention Complex (St. Louis Convention Center) in St. Louis, Missouri. This year's theme is *Preparedness Summit 2019: The Evolving Threat Environment*.

- Participating in the 2019 Preparedness Summit is an investment in your agency and community because it's an opportunity to:
- Interact with leaders in the industry to expand your professional **network** and raise your profile in the public health preparedness space;
- Share your agency's best practices and expertise with colleagues from the healthcare and emergency management and public health preparedness fields to **contribute** to the advancement of our nation's health security;
- Build **partnerships** with these life-saving industries to strengthen your agency's capacity in the face of emerging threats;
- Advance your **creative-thinking skill set** to find new ways to prepare for, respond to, and recovery from threats like pandemic diseases, the opioid crisis, active shooter emergencies, and cybersecurity threats;
- Participate in interactive training and take away innovative solutions and **practical strategies** to meet the requirements of the evolving threat environment.

[Register here.](#)

## NACCHO Model Practices

NACCHO's Model Practices program honors and recognizes outstanding local health initiatives from across the nation, and shares and promotes these practices among local health departments through the Model Practices Database. Submissions are due December 12, 2018.

All Model Practices winners will be recognized at the NACCHO Annual 2019 (Orlando, July 9-11) Grand Awards Ceremony. If your local health department would like to apply for a Model Practice Award, or if you want to learn more about NACCHO's past Model Practice Awardees, check out the [Model Practices Webinar Recording](#) and the [Model Practices Website](#).

## NACCHO Releases Forces of Change Survey Report

NACCHO's Research and Evaluation team is excited to announce the release of the 2018 Forces of Change report highlighting new findings on the forces that are affecting the nation's local health departments (LHDs). Visit <http://www.nacchoprofilestudy.org/forces-of-change> to view the full report.

Results show that although the economic situation is slowly improving for many LHDs, workforce capacity challenges persist. One-third of LHDs reported experiencing job losses in 2017. LHDs also faced with challenges associated with emerging public health threats, such as the use of opioids, increased severity of influenza seasons, and impacts of climate change. LHDs are adapting to these changing priorities by shifting towards a population health approach. For example, many LHDs reported addressing issues related to food insecurity, family supports, and community infrastructure. An additional factor supporting public health transformation is informatics

capacity, which enables LHDs to collect, analyze, and communicate data across health systems to effectively respond to the dynamic health needs in their communities.

## Announcements

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### ASPR TRACIE Mass Violence Resources

Mass violence incidents require efficiency and coordination among multiple response entities. Efforts may need to be directed toward doing the greatest good for the greatest amount of people, which is counter to day-to-day trauma triage. These [ASPR TRACIE-developed resources](#) can help our stakeholders prepare for, respond to, and help their communities recover from these traumatic events.

### HHS Declares Public Health Emergency in California

HHS Secretary Alex Azar this week [declared a public health emergency](#) in California due to wildfires. The declaration follows President Trump's declaration of a state of emergency and gives Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries and their healthcare providers and suppliers greater flexibility meeting emergency health needs created by the wildfires.

HHS has deployed regional emergency coordinators to work with state and local authorities and emergency response officials. Staff from HHS' National Disaster Medical System and the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps are prepared to provide medical care and public health support.



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.

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