Volunteer Management – Recruitment, Retention and Deployment Strategies
Abby Morris

• Abby Morris, CVA
  • Regional Medical Reserve Corps Program Specialist
    • Clackamas, Multnomah, Washington counties- Oregon

• When Abby is not working, she is spending time with her family and friends (usually outside), rocking out on a stationary bike, watching awful reality tv, or reading.
• Preston Lam, MPH
  • ALCO MRC Director
    • Alameda County, California

• When Preston is not working, he enjoys traveling, exploring different cuisines, and playing sports like basketball and tennis.
Defining a Volunteer

How does your unit define a volunteer?

- Someone who has filled out a registration form or an interest form
- Someone who has completed trainings set forth by the unit as onboarding criteria
- Someone who has deployed once or more
- Other definitions
Why is defining a volunteer important for your unit?

• Having a strong definition and understanding of what a volunteer is will enable you to create more strategic recruitment campaigns, onboarding/orientation programs, and retention initiatives.

Just Because People Sign Up Does Not Mean They Will Show Up
Volunteer Recruitment

• Website (Local/National)
• Community Outreach (Preparedness Fairs, Booths, Presentations)
• Community Preparedness Trainings (STB, Narcan, Epi, C-POD, Safety and PPE)
• Partnerships
  o Medical/Health Universities
  o Health Care Services Agency (Public Health, Behavioral Health, Environmental Health, Office of the Agency Director – EMS)
  o Health Care Coalition
  o Other Preparedness/Response Organizations (VOAD, EMA, CERT)

✓ Personal contact
✓ Learning Strengths & Understanding Needs
✓ Setting Realistic Expectations
Volunteer Deployment

Pre-Deployment

- Background Checks and Verified Licences
- Updated Contact Information
- Assign Uniform (Shirts, Pants, ID cards, etc.)
- Pre-kitted Supplies (Shelter, Pharmacy, First aid)
- Maintain Skills
  - Shelter Skills Exercise – patient lifting/injury prevention, medical assessment, O2/Nebulizer, Epi/Narcan, assessment, wound care
  - Familiarity with equipment
Volunteer Deployment

**During Deployment**

- Just in Time Trainings - deployment logistics, infection prevention and control, shelters, etc.
- Periodic Check-ins
- Completing 214 Activity Logs
Transitioning into Blue Skies

• Communicate to volunteers that the emergency response is winding down or ending
  o Outline what blue sky activities are available or refer to other volunteer opportunities
  o Outline training opportunities
  o Let them know when you might be reaching out to them in the future.
  o What else?
Blue Skies Activities

• List of Activities from Washington County MRC Unit
  o **Outreach/Education:** Engaging in outreach to the public to support community preparedness efforts (disaster toileting a popular one), public health awareness campaigns, and other areas of interest.
  o **Teaching:** Stop the Bleed, Compression only CPR, CPR/AED certification, and First Aid certification
  o **Learning:** Trainings including Psychological First Aid, Harm Reduction 101, Managing Compassion Fatigue, Wilderness First Aid and many other exciting courses provided at no cost to our volunteers.
  o **First Aid:** Providing first aid services at community events such as Take a Soldier Fishing
Volunteer Retention

• Showing Gratitude (Calls, Emails, Newsletters, Feedback)

• Volunteer Meetings
  o Bi-monthly Membership Meetings
  o Region II MRC Meetings

• Volunteer Opportunities
  o Community Preparedness (STB, Narcan, Epi, C-POD)
  o Exercises and Drills

• Continuous Education Opportunities
  o Attending Conferences
  o Renewing Licenses/Certificates
  o Continuous Education Units
  o ICS Training
Affiliated & Inactive Members

What about the volunteers (or registrants) who did not complete the onboarding requirements?

• Affiliated Volunteers (DSW, CERT, MRC, FAST, etc.)
  o Non-emergency activities
  o May not be deployed with ALCO MRC during disaster unless authorized by both organization directors and the Alameda County Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator (MHOAC)

• Inactive Volunteers
  o Volunteers were only withdrawn if specifically requested
  o Volunteers who had registered, or volunteered, but did not complete onboarding requirements were placed as inactive.
Inactive Volunteer Status

• What does having an inactive volunteer status mean?
  ○ The former volunteer’s (registrant) unit membership is “on pause”.
  ○ They may rejoin the unit at any time by completing the onboarding requirements.
  ○ They will need to complete the onboarding trainings to rejoin the unit and have an “active” status. An “active” status means they are eligible to be deployed.
  ○ Regional MRC Staff will send the former volunteer (registrant) the forthcoming Tri-County MRC Collaborative Quarterly Newsletter that shares updates about unit activities. Former volunteers also receive information about forthcoming in-person onboarding options in case they have an interest in being an active member but do not want to participate in virtual trainings.
  ○ Should there be a large-scale natural disaster or public health emergency, Regional MRC staff will reach out to former volunteers (registrants) after active members have been deployed if there is a need for more volunteer support. Should volunteers decide to join the effort, they will need to complete Just in Time trainings at a minimum.
Volunteer Labeling and Leadership Framework

• Tier 3 RISE Award Recipient- Washington County of Oregon
  ○ Clackamas and Multnomah counties involved in project as well and the project has since turned into a program.

• Centralizing onboarding, credentialing, administrative, and training processes for volunteers across the above three counties (Tri-Counties)

• Utilize Tiered Training Framework, which simultaneously functions as a Volunteer Leadership Framework and helps prioritize the order of deployments.
### Outcomes of RISE AWARD Project

#### Clackamas, Multnomah & Washington Counties, Oregon MRC

- Shared regional definition of volunteers
- Onboarding program
- Accurate count of active (interested in deploying/participating in blue sky activities) volunteers
  - Clackamas County - 25
  - Multnomah County - 83
  - Washington County - 72
    - Total - 180

#### Alameda County MRC

- Onboarding program
- Increased number of deployable ready members
- Safeguard volunteers for deployment
- Purchase materials and supplies to support MRC Surge response activities
  - Updated Shelter Kits
  - Develop MRC Pharmaceutical Cache
Contact information

Preston Lam
Alameda County Medical Reserve Corps
Alameda County EMS Agency
510-268-7023
MRC-EMS@acgov.org
https://acphd.org/alcomrc/

Abby Morris
Clackamas, Multnomah & Washington Counties, Oregon MRC
971-804-4401
Abby_morris@washingtoncountyor.gov
https://www.clackamas.us/publichealth/emergencypreparedness.html
Table Discussion

• How did COVID-19 impact recruitment, retention and deployment of volunteers in your unit – both in the middle of COVID 19 and currently?
• What are your most effective recruitment strategies?
• What are your most effective retention and recognition strategies?