



# Spotlight

"Be Prepared, Be Informed, Be Involved."



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## DIRECTOR NEWS

With the official declaration of the first influenza pandemic in 40 years, public health and government officials have been very busy preparing for the next wave of the H1N1 flu. Scientists and public health experts are closely monitoring the progression of the disease and debate continues over whether the virus virulence will increase or remain unchanged. Regardless of how this debate ends, and how the H1N1 virus presents itself in the coming year, Tristate Medical Reserve Corps (TMRC) volunteers will be viewed as a critical part of public health preparedness efforts.

The TMRC has increased our efforts to recruit, train, and retain volunteers. These efforts include updating and expanding the website ([www.tristatemrc.org](http://www.tristatemrc.org)), scheduling additional trainings and exercises, reviewing and revising the online database of volunteers, and working to arrange the first ever Regional TMRC Volunteer Meeting for August 1<sup>st</sup>.

I strongly encourage each of you to take some important steps to increase our ability as TMRC volunteers to respond to public health emergencies. If you have not already done so, please log in to the Volunteer Mobilizer: [www.ohioresponds.odh.ohio.gov/](http://www.ohioresponds.odh.ohio.gov/) to verify that we have the most current and accurate contact information for you. In addition, if you have not yet attended some of our additional training opportunities I encourage you to do so.

Finally, thank you for your continued support of the TMRC program. I hope you realize the importance of your role in a public health response and in our preparedness planning. I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Sincerely,

Jared Warner, MEM, RS, Regional Director TMRC

### Regional TMRC Volunteer Meeting

TMRC will host its first Volunteer Annual Meeting on Saturday, August 1, 2009 from 8:00 a.m. to 12 Noon at Woodward Career Technical High School at 7005 Reading Rd, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237. All TMRC volunteers or those interested in volunteering in the Tristate Region are invited to attend.

Volunteers will have the opportunity to attend four breakout sessions and network with other community volunteers. Trainings include: An introduction to what TMRC is and its role in emergency preparedness; Information about the region's Alternate Care Center and how it is used; Points of Dispensing and the mass dispensing process; and Family Preparedness – Learning how to prepare your family for emergencies. All registered volunteers will also have an opportunity to get their volunteer ID card while at the event. Door prizes and a light breakfast will be provided.

If you have any questions or would like to see if there is space still available please call (513) 357-7206 or E-mail: [Libby.Walter@Cincinnati-Oh.gov](mailto:Libby.Walter@Cincinnati-Oh.gov).

### Inside this issue:

Training Corner 2

National News: H1N1 2

Cincinnati Tests POD 3

Psychological First Aid 3

Volunteer Badges 4

Training On-line 4

Volunteer Spotlight 4

### Special Points of Interest:

- Meeting new people at Orientation Training.
- National News: H1N1 Update.
- Cincinnati Tests POD
- Psychological First Aid: What to expect.
- Volunteer Spotlight: Meet Rheta Caravantes, RN from Warren Co.

### Need an ID Card?

ID Cards will be available during the Volunteer Annual Meeting.

## Training Corner—Orientation Training



*“Tristate Medical Reserve Corps is a collaboration of public health MRC Units from Northern Kentucky, Eastern Indiana and Southwest Ohio.”*

It’s a beautiful sunny Saturday morning as I drive to the Northern Kentucky Health Department to attend the Tristate Medical Reserve Corps (TMRC) Orientation Training. As I pull into the parking lot I am amazed at how many like minded individuals have also arrived to attend Jean Caudill’s training. I am greeted by Jean’s smiling face as she checks everyone in. Information on how to join, prepare and work with the Northern Kentucky Medical Reserve Corps (NKMRC) Unit, a chapter of the TMRC, is presented in an easy to read format for both medical and non-medical volunteers. Jean is the Unit Coordinator in charge of recruitment, coordination and training of volunteers for four Northern Kentucky Counties. She works with other MRC Unit Coordinators in Northern Kentucky, Eastern Indiana and Southwest Ohio that make up the TMRC.

The orientation provides information about the history of the Medical Reserve Corps and its role in supporting public health agencies in the event of an emergency. Volunteers learn about the registration process and just in time training provided for volunteers. Other training opportunities are available for volunteers to learn about the National Incident Management System and Incident Command System. These trainings can be taken on line which provides flexibility in scheduling training for volunteers. Other hands-on training classes are also taught throughout the Tristate.

“Why is it called the TMRC?” asked Dr. Petty, a class participant from West Chester, Ohio who, like myself has attended several orientations. “I don’t understand how they all work together?” Tristate Medical Reserve Corps is a collaboration of public health MRC Units from Northern Kentucky, Eastern Indiana and Southwest Ohio that have joined forces to provide better public health response during an emergency. Each unit still works with their own county, however, when additional help is needed such as during the hurricane force winds in September 2008, the MRC Coordinators can leverage resources to better serve their communities. Another common question is “Do I have to respond outside of my community?” It is not required for volunteers to help outside of their community. However, if there is a great need, you could be asked if you would help.

As I said good bye to my new friends, I realized, it’s nice to know that we will never be alone. If you registered for TMRC on line, please sign up and attend the orientation training. Photo’s will be taken for your badges at the training.

### National News: Long Anticipated Influenza Pandemic Begins

Since late April when the novel H1N1 influenza A virus emerged in North America, there have been over 128,000 confirmed cases with nearly 675 deaths globally. 40,000 cases and over 250 deaths have been confirmed in the United States. Although much of the illness to date has been mild, younger adults have been affected to a far greater degree than is typical with seasonal influenza. Hospitalizations and deaths have been predominantly among persons with underlying chronic conditions or other known risk factors for severe illness, but close to a third have been otherwise healthy.

The World Health Organization declared a pandemic in early June and work is progressing globally to develop an effective vaccine against this new virus. As early as mid-October, vaccine may be available in the US, which will initially be targeted at healthcare workers, persons with chronic conditions, infants, children and younger adults. Since persons over 60 may have some degree of immunity to this virus based on prior illness with similar viruses circulating before 1957, the healthy older population will not be the primary vaccination target group. MRC members will play an important role in public health efforts to vaccinate the American population.



## Cincinnati Tests POD

On October 11, 2008 Cincinnati Health Department (CHD) held a Points of Dispensing (POD) exercise at Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS). The main goal of this exercise was to set up the POD (including all needed materials), conduct just-in-time training for the set-up process and the operation of a POD, and conduct tear down of the stations. This process was timed and reported to the Centers for Disease Control as required by the Cities Readiness Initiative Grant. Volunteers from TMRC, CPS and CHD attended. The test was very successful, with setup and tear down times well below what was expected.



*“I have spoken of a thousand points of light, of all the community organizations that are spread like stars throughout the Nation, doing good.” - George H. W. Bush*

## Psychological First Aid - September 26, 2009

This basic level Disaster Services course taught by the American Red Cross consists of five separate segments and a self-review questionnaire which is completed after the training has been completed. The course provides a framework for understanding the factors that affect stress responses in disaster relief workers and the clients they serve. In addition, it provides practical suggestions about what you can say and do as you practice the principles of Psychological First Aid.

After completing this training, participants will be able to:

- Describe how to recognize the signs of stress in clients, co-workers and themselves.
- Apply psychological first aid principles in providing immediate support to people who may be experiencing stress.
- Describe how to obtain additional mental health support for themselves, co-workers and clients.

Class is September 26, 2009 from 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the Springdale Health Department, 11700 Springfield Pike, Springdale, OH. To register or to receive more information call (513) 346-5727 or e-mail [JHicks@springdale.org](mailto:JHicks@springdale.org).



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**Where do I get my badge?**

Badges are an essential part of the volunteer registration process. Both current and new volunteers will be able to get their TMRC badge at the Regional TMRC Volunteer Meeting on August 1, 2009. If you can not attend, please contact your County Unit Coordinator.

**On Line Courses—**

**IS-7 A Citizens Guide to Disaster Assistance**

**Course Overview**

This independent study course provides a basic understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the local community and the State and Federal government in providing disaster assistance. It is appropriate for both the general public and those involved in emergency management who need a general introduction to disaster assistance. If you are interested in this and other independent study courses please go to our website at:

[Http://www.swoph.org/tmrconlinetraining.htm](http://www.swoph.org/tmrconlinetraining.htm)

Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Emergency Management Institute offers online training courses to first responders, volunteers, and others interested in emergency management training. The FEMA Independent Study section provides access to all online training

**Volunteer Spotlight  
Meet Rheta Caravantes, RN, Warren Co. TMRC Unit**

Rheta Caravantes, RN has been a TMRC Volunteer for the past two years and is a founding member of the TMRC Leaders Group. “As a nurse I was looking for ways to help people and I was always interested in responding. I remember wanting to help the night of the Beverly Hills fire while working at Children’s Hospital. Now that my children are older I can help and respond. I have always thought it was important to be prepared at home and wish to continue to help others. “

“During the September 2008 Windstorm, Rheta was instrumental in helping us at the Emergency Operation Center.” said Jared Warner, Director TMRC. “She helped make phone calls to staff the Special Needs Shelter and helped to identify several need that had to be addressed in the community.” People had to be checked on to make sure everyone was safe.

When asked what advice she would give other volunteers, she said “ Have a plan, be prepared, and have supplies. Make sure your supplies are in a location that can be easily accessed.” She learned that lesson first hand when she couldn’t open her garage. Thank you Rheta for your hard work and dedication to TMRC!



**SAVE THE DATE -  
TMRC VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED**

The Clermont County unit of the Tristate Medical Reserve Corps will be hosting a drive through POD to provide seasonal flu shots on October 10, 2009 at the Clermont County Fairgrounds. At least 50 volunteers are needed to work with Health District staff to register the public, provide shots, direct traffic and provide logistics. Watch for an email with information on how to register to participate in late August. If you have any questions please e-mail:

[ckisner@co.clermont.oh.us](mailto:ckisner@co.clermont.oh.us)

