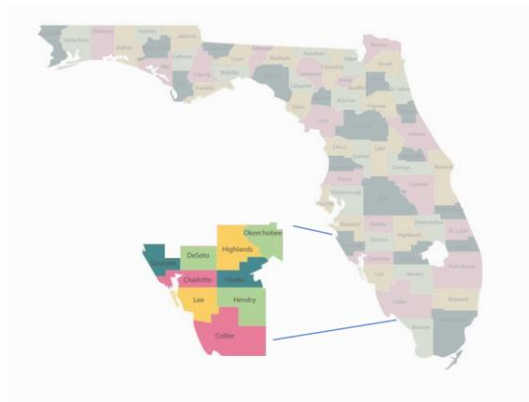


Operational Support & Response Plan



Introduction

The Southwest Florida Healthcare Coalition (SWFHCC) supports the Florida Region 6 healthcare sub-coalitions, communities, and other response agencies to collaboratively plan for all-hazards emergencies by promoting intra-regional cooperation and sharing of resources.

SWFHCC encompasses nine counties: Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, Highlands, Lee, Okeechobee, and Sarasota. As of July 1, 2021, according to the US Census, Region 6 has the combined regional population as 2,046,373 full-time residents.¹ Population increases owing to seasonal residents, and tourists who vacation in the area especially during the winter months.

Region 6 is bordered to the west by the Gulf of Mexico, to the east by Lake Okeechobee and has numerous rivers, creeks, and wetlands as well as floodplains within its borders. The differences in geography, size of counties and economies offer numerous challenges and opportunities to respond to both manmade and natural disasters.

Purpose

To lay out the role of the SWFHCC in supporting coordinated communications and other response efforts between essential partner agencies, institutions, and community-wide emergency response related disciplines throughout the region.

Scope

The Coalition serves to support its members by coordinating resources, communications, patient distribution as needed and helping provide situational awareness to its members. This plan does not replace existing facility Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans (CEMPs). Individual health care facilities are responsible for implementing their CEMPs, including logistical support. All facilities are required by Florida statute as well as federal regulation to have their own emergency plans in place, review the plans, and update them as needed.

This plan is not intended to duplicate or replace existing roles of Emergency Management or Emergency Support Functions as outlined in Florida State Statutes Chapter 252.

Coalition Membership:

Membership in the healthcare coalition shall be extended to the following Essential Partner agencies, institutions, and community-wide emergency response related disciplines.

Core HCC members should include, at a minimum, the following:

- Hospitals
- EMS (including inter-facility and other non-EMS patient transport systems)
- Emergency management organizations
- Public health agencies

¹ Census.gov data retrieved October 13, 2022, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/FL/PST045221>

Additional HCC members may include but are not limited to the following:

- Behavioral health services and organizations
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)
- Dialysis centers and regional Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)-funded end-stage renal disease (ESRD) networks
- Federal facilities (e.g., U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Centers, Indian Health Service facilities, military treatment facilities)
- Home health agencies (including home and community-based services)
- Infrastructure companies (e.g., utility and communication companies)
- Jurisdictional partners, including cities, counties, and tribes.
- Local chapters of health care professional organizations (e.g., medical society, professional society, hospital association)
- Local public safety agencies (e.g., law enforcement and fire services)
- Medical and device manufacturers and distributors
- Non-governmental organizations (e.g., American Red Cross, voluntary organizations active in disasters, amateur radio operators, etc.)
- Outpatient health care delivery (e.g., ambulatory care, clinics, community and tribal health centers, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), urgent care centers, freestanding emergency rooms, stand-alone surgery centers)
- Primary care providers, including pediatric and women's health care providers.
- Schools and universities, including academic medical centers.
- Skilled nursing, nursing, and long-term care facilities
- Support service providers (e.g., clinical laboratories, pharmacies, radiology, blood banks, poison control centers)
- Other (e.g., childcare services, dental clinics, social work services, faith-based organizations)
- Hospice and end of life care facilities.

Concept of Operations

The SWFHCC will operate in collaboration with and in support of state-level efforts including the ESF-8 to help meet the following needs:

1. Support Communications between member healthcare facilities and county ESF-8 lead agencies.
2. Share essential information from trusted information sources such as ESF-8, Emergency Management, the Florida Department of Health, or National Weather Service with members.
3. Support regional coordination of resources within member facilities.
4. Assist and support with identifying and meeting patient & member needs during the activation including patient distribution.

Planning Assumptions:

The need for information sharing will increase both at a county, regional and state level.

Healthcare facilities will follow guidance from, local Emergency Management offices and County and state ESF-8 leads to help ensure the safety of staff and patients.

Healthcare organizations will commit their staff and internal resources to support internal response before requesting assistance from other partners.

Healthcare Organizations will rely on their existing and approved Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans including Mutual Aid Agreements with suppliers and other agencies prior to requesting assistance.

A disaster may impact communications at the local and regional level thereby hindering the ability to coordinate with other agencies. This may cause additional challenges including delayed response times.

Healthcare Facilities that are part of this plan will follow the Incident Command System (ICS).

The Southwest Florida Healthcare Coalition exists to support the activities of local agencies by playing a support role and will not dictate policy.

Activation:

The Operational Support Plan will be activated during an incident by the Executive Council. The plan can also be activated by the Executive Council's designee or at the request of county Emergency Management or ESF-8 lead in the likelihood of severe weather or during a no-notice event.

Healthcare Coalition members may also request the activation of the Operational Support Plan. This request will be forwarded to Executive Council for approval.

Notifications:

The Southwest Florida Healthcare Coalition will contact members via ReadyOp or email upon the activation of this plan.

Communications:

All members under the guidance of the Executive Council will have the responsibility of planning and preparing for emergent events.

The SWFHCC will disseminate information using one or more of three platforms: ReadyOp, email, or conference call.

ReadyOp: This is a web-based application that is used across several counties. ReadyOp allows all members within region 6 to be contacted at the same time via notifications through email, phone or text.

Email: Members will receive emails outside of ReadyOp from a representative from the Health Planning Council. Note: a tertiary email address: healthcarecoalitionswfl@gmail.com has been established to ensure continuity of operations should other means fail.

Conference Call: Once the need is determined to exist, a representative from the SWFHCC will assist partner agencies by conducting a daily conference call to disseminate information and collect status updates from healthcare facilities, if requested. The information will be passed on to the appropriate agency.

During an incident the SWFHCC will communicate verified information from the regional and state level,

allow members to share status with each other and act as an additional form of communications should primary means break down.

Messaging will continue throughout the activation period to include reminders to update in-patient bed counts, twice daily Situation Reports and conference calls as needed.

Post Incident coordination will include lists of available disaster recovery assistance (E.G. FEMA Public Assistance Programs).

Resource Coordination:

The SWFHCC will keep on hand a list of inventoried regional assets as well as individual agency assets. The SWFHCC representative will facilitate coordination between the facility with the need, and the facility with the available resource. Neither the Southwest Florida Healthcare Coalition, nor its sub-coalitions will be responsible for the transportation, liability of use, or damage of these resources. During an activation there are often scarce resources to meet all the needs and demands, the Coalition will coordinate with the Executive Council, ESF-leads and other partners such as emergency management and the Florida Department of Health to ensure requests are being made through the appropriate channels and that available resources are distributed appropriately. The Coalition will likely not be able to meet all the needs and demands during these periods.

Member Support:

The SWFLHCC will assist members including EMS, Hospitals and other member types as needed in planning for indicators, triggers, and response strategies during crisis situations. Further, as needed the SWFLHCC will support members in transitioning to contingency care by requesting resources or assisting in the coordination of moving patients to other facilities. In preparation for response events the HCC will incorporate crisis standards of care conditions into exercises and training events. The SWFHCC encourages members to maintain a robust roster of partners including MOAs and mutual aid agreements.

Administration and Maintenance:

A. Review Process and Plan Update:

- This plan will be reviewed annually and updated as needed or, as exercises, trainings or real-world events show opportunities for improvement.
- All members will have the opportunity for review and input.
- Changes must be approved with a simple majority of the Executive Council via electronic poll.
- Following a review and approval process the plan will be distributed via email to members within the region and via website <https://hpcswf.com/programs/southwest-florida-healthcare-coalition>

B. Maintenance:

- The plan will be kept in electronic form as well as two (2) binder copies.
- The binders will also include updated member rosters, supply integrity plan, Statewide ESF-8 contact information and coalition's Department of Health Contract Manager contact information.

- The plan will also contain a current list of in-patient bed counts in the area. Bed counts come from AHCA and will be updated at least annually. It is not the responsibility of the SWFHCC to update or maintain the bed counts for facilities. This list will only be used as an informational guide.
- Member rosters will be updated quarterly.
- In case of extended absence, the coalition representative will designate a secondary point of contact for email communications.

Acronyms

CEMP	Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
NWS	National Weather Service
SWFHCC	Southwest Florida Healthcare Coalition

Version Number	Description of Change	Date	Posted By	Approved by
1	Created Region 6 Operational Support Plan	1/4/2018	BN	PB
2	Revision 1 of Operational Plan	1/6/2019	BN	PB
3	Revision 2 Operational Plan	1/8/2020	KG	PB
4	Revision 3 Operational Plan	5/28/2021	KG	PB
5	Revision 4 Operational Plan (following Hurricane Ian)	10/12/2022	KG	PB
6	Revision 4 Operational Plan	2/22/23	OF	PB