

The Role of the Nurse in the Medical Needs Shelter

Faculty

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Objectives

- **Identify the key functions and roles of a nurse in a Medical Needs Shelter (MNS)**
- **Discuss 4 potential groups of clients that may be found in a MNS**
- **Identify ways to prepare family, self and others to work in a MNS**

Definition of a Medical Needs Shelter

- **A secure facility with power, water, sanitation, limited food service and medical oversight**

Definition of a Medical Needs Shelter

- **A refuge of last resort during emergency conditions for people:**
 - **with conditions requiring limited medical/nursing oversight who cannot be accommodated in a general population shelter**
 - **who bring their own caregiver, medical supplies, equipment, and special dietary supplies**

Medical Needs Shelters



Procedures for notifying Volunteer Nurses

- Nurses may be contacted by the Area Nursing Director in an event or by the voice messaging system if their phone number is in the volunteer data base

Notification Will Include

- Nature of assignment
- Where to report and when
- Length of assignment

Nature of Assignment

- Hurricane
- Flu epidemic
- Ice storm
- Flood
- Point of Dispensing (POD) medication dispensing

Supply Distribution to Areas



Flu Vaccine Clinic





When and Where to Report

- **Volunteers will be given specific locations and directions for all reporting or staging sites**
- **The time to report will be provided at the time of notification**

Length of Assignment

- **Length of assignment can vary based on the availability of the volunteer nurse**

Nurse Response

- **Nurse will not be expected to be on duty for more than 12 hours per day**
- **The staff nurse will be expected to remain in the shelter until released by the charge nurse**

Nursing Roles in a Shelter

- **Nurse Manager (ADPH Staff)**
- **Charge Nurse (ADPH Staff)**
- **Staff Nurse (RN & LPN)**
- **Care Assistants**

Staff Responsibilities While in the Shelter



Nurse Manager

- This is a registered Nurse appointed by the State Nursing Director, who reports to the Area Nursing Director or designee
- Provides supervision for the nursing and public health staff
- Oversees the medical aspects of the shelter

Nurse Manager

- Selects patient triage and care areas
- Communicates with the Emergency operations Center (EOC)

Charge Nurse

- Reports to Nurse Manager
- Supervises triage/assessment
- Monitors condition of patients and transfers as needed
- Assigns/supervises all staff related to the medical management of the shelter

Staff Nurse

- Reports to the Charge Nurse
- Delivers appropriate nursing services within the medical needs shelter under the direction of the Charge Nurse
- Assists the Charge Nurse as needed

Staff Nurse

- Performs triage/nursing assessment on individuals presenting at the medical needs shelter
- Refers individuals who do not meet the medical needs criteria to the mass care shelter or other facility with assistance from the service worker
- Assesses the physical condition of the patients at least every 2-3 hours

Staff Nurse

- Assists caregiver in delivering services to patients
- Assists with the collection of medical data pertaining to patients
- Assists with the discharge process of patients
- Assists in the general stand down of the shelter

Care Assistants

- Function
 - Provide patient care, activities of daily living, and light housekeeping duties

Care Assistants

- Personnel Utilized
 - Certified Nursing Assistants
 - Healthcare students
 - Home Health Aides
 - Home Attendants
 - Nurses Aides
 - Orderlies

Types of Patients found in a Medical Needs Shelter

- Diabetics
- Patients with Respiratory Issues
- Patients requiring tube changes
- Patients requiring simple dressings



Diabetics

- Diabetics may be common clients of the MNS in order to assist with:
 - Medication administration
 - Blood glucose monitoring
 - Nutritional assistance

Breathing Apparatus Users

- **Common breathing apparatus seen in MNS include**
 - C-pap and Bi-pap
 - Oxygen
 - Home ventilation clients

Tube Changes

- **Items you may see in a shelter may include**
 - Foley, suprapubic catheters;
 - Gastro tubes;
 - PICC lines, Groshogs and
 - Hickman catheters
- **Feeding tubes such as: Gastrostomy tubes, MIC tubes, and PEG tubes**

Simple Dressings

- **Individuals may be admitted to the MNS to assist with simple dressings or assistance with acquiring supplies**

Being Prepared at Home

- **Prepare for your family, pets, and self**
 - Have a supply of medications
 - Know who will provide care for family members, including pets
 - Have one week of provisions for each family member, including pets

Being Prepared at Home

- Keep a list of all important phone numbers
- Secure all important documents
- Have extra supplies on hand

Preparing for Deployment

- **Take comfort items and foods**
- **Favorite pillow, favorite quilt, favorite photos journal, magazines, peanut butter/jelly**
- **Bottled water or juice for diabetics**
- **Items required for special diets**

Preparing for Deployment

- Clothing for seven days, place all items for one day in plastic bag
- Personal care items
- Sleeping bag, pillow, extra sheets
- Daily and prn medications, Tylenol, Advil
- Towels, washcloths (at least 2)
- Soap, moist handtowels, tissues

Preparing for Deployment

- Cell phone and charger
- Books or magazines
- Snack items, granola bars
- Extra pair of shoes
- Small flashlight with extra batteries
- Radio with ear phones, earplugs

Liability Issues, Am I Covered?

- Governor of Alabama has the authority to declare a state of emergency
- A state of emergency is defined as
 - Enemy attack, sabotage
 - Fire, flood and “other natural causes”

Liability Issues, Am I Covered?

- As a volunteer with ADPH, you are covered just as a State of Alabama employee would be covered
- Function with in your scope of practice and knowledge level

Other Resources

- Alabama Healthcare Disaster Planning Guide (located at: [www.adph.org/CEP - Preparedness A-Z](http://www.adph.org/CEP-Preparedness-A-Z))
- All-Hazards: What Are They and How Can I Prepare? (located at: [www.adph.org/CEP - Community Preparedness](http://www.adph.org/CEP-Community-Preparedness))
- Family Readiness Guide (located at: www.adph.org/CEP)

Contact Information

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