



Disaster Healthcare Volunteers DHV Journal



Informing Healthcare Volunteers About Emergency Medical Response Efforts in California

In this Issue:

Page Article

1. [Manager/Response Personnel Unit Staff Message](#)
2. [CA EMSA Disaster Medical Response Programs](#)
3. [MRC Corner](#)
- 4-7. [MRC Unit Articles](#)
8. [Online Disaster Training Opportunities](#)
9. [DHV User Tips](#)
10. [DHV is California's ESAR-VHP Program](#)
11. [Have you updated your DHV Registration Information Lately?](#)

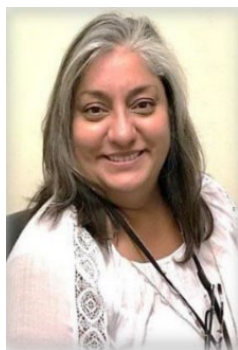
Spring 2022



Manager/Response Personnel Unit Staff Message

Theresa Gonzales

Manager, Response Personnel Unit



Janet Lago

National Volunteer Week is being observed April 17-23. Many people cite the ability to make a difference in their community as their reason for volunteering but there are other benefits as well. You can make a difference in your community while making new friends, aiding the cause of your choice, and connecting with colleagues in the healthcare community.

After the tragic World Trade Center attack in 2001, thousands of volunteers flooded New York to offer their assistance. However, there was no way to verify the credentials of those desperately wishing to help. A national system to pre-register was born from that realization and it is called the *Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals* (ESAR-VHP). In California, the system is known as the Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV) System.



The Disaster Healthcare Volunteers Program was developed to register, search for, and notify licensed healthcare professionals who are willing to volunteer in an emergency. Volunteers are organized locally and may be utilized locally, regionally or throughout the state and assignments can range from hours to days. Of course, as a volunteer, you have the option to accept or decline any opportunity.

This week we recognize those that have served and continue to serve as volunteers, and we urge you to invite your friends and colleagues to join your local unit by registering in the DHV System at <https://healthcarevolunteers.ca.gov/> to make your community a better place to live!

CA EMSA Disaster Medical Response Programs

California Medical Assistant Teams (CAL-MAT)



The CAL-MAT is a paid program within the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) under Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF 8) which provides medical support across the State of California during disasters. There are currently 5 CAL-MAT units that are comprised of almost 1,300 members that include Emergency Medical Technicians, Paramedics, Certified Nursing Aids, Licensed Vocational Nurses, Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Physicians, Pharmacists, and Behavioral Health Professionals, Administrative, Logisticians, Warehouse Workers, Safety Officers, Communications Officers, and more. CAL-MAT prepare and respond to natural disasters such as wildfires, earthquakes, floods, and other emergencies like the COVID 19 pandemic and terrorist attacks. During a disaster, members can deploy for a minimum of two weeks at various locations across the state. There has been major growth for the program since the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic. CAL-MAT units consist of members who are in a geographical area to which they reside. Unit members typically meet a few times a year at the discretion of the Unit Lead. Communication for disasters go through the Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV) System. These units include both medical and non-medical paid emergency hires that provide support during a disaster upon an approved request in accordance with the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS).



For more information regarding the CAL-MAT Program, please visit <https://emsa.ca.gov/disaster-medical-response-programs/>. If you have any questions regarding the CAL-MAT Program, please send an email to cal.mat@emsa.ca.gov

California Health Corps (CAHC)

CAHC is comprised of approximately 450 healthcare professionals, including Registered Nurses, Licensed Vocational Nurses, Certified Nursing Aids, Emergency Medical Technicians, Nurse Practitioners, Physicians (MD, DO, Psychiatrist), Physicians Assistants, Respiratory Therapists, and Behavior Health Professionals with active licenses to provide support to medical facilities that are impacted due to a medical surge. The CAHC program was designed to provide specific health care professionals to medical facilities or vaccination PODS experiencing a staffing shortage. CAHC members may also be deployed to support the fulfillment of state-level medical facilities in accordance with the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and during a disaster.

Please visit <https://emsa.ca.gov/disaster-medical-response-programs/> to learn more about the program. If you have any questions regarding the CAHC program, please send an email to: cahealthcorps@emsa.ca.gov

MRC Corner

Lauran Molina

California State MRC Coordinator



National Volunteer week is the third week of April. It is a time to say thank you and honor all the volunteers. Volunteering builds communities and creates a better place to live. Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) engages local communities to strengthen public health, reduce vulnerability, build resilience, and improve preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities. There are over 21,000 accepted and pending MRC Volunteers and 35 MRC Units in California. A big THANK YOU for serving the golden state and for improving the health and safety of your communities.

This quarter many MRC Units have still been activated to support COVID-19 response with testing and vaccination clinics. Other unit activities include,

Ventura County MRC had their volunteers conduct surveys with the homeless community and provided stroke, heart attack, and seizure trainings. **San Diego County MRC** conducted a communications drill with their Disaster Shelter Health Services Team. **City of Cupertino MRC** gave a First Aid/Triage training for their volunteers.

The Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) staff will be hosting an MRC Coordinators Training Workshop in May. We anticipate that the MRC Training Workshop will have 45 in attendance. The workshop will provide an opportunity for California's MRCs to strategize on the incorporation of MRCs into local emergency plans and to highlight daily best practices for sustainability, standardized training, and real situation experiences when responding to public health emergencies or disasters. Workshop presenters, to name a few, will include Keirsten Andersen from the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO), MRC Coordinators from units that responded to the 2020/2021 fires and COVID-19. Ron Bialek from MRC Train, Don Glueckert from Cal OES, HOSA Future Health Professionals of Cathedral City High School.

Please encourage your friends, colleagues, and family to register to volunteer at <https://healthcarevolunteers.ca.gov/> by selecting the nearest MRC Unit to where they reside. More MRC information can be found here: <https://mrc.hhs.gov/>.

Please be sure to continue reading to hear about California's ONLY Statewide MRC, California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (CAVMRC), a few excerpts from a volunteer with Sonoma County MRC, Contra Costa MRCs new MRC Coordinator, and to hear about San Diego MRCs **Medical Countermeasures** (MCM) team.

MRC Unit Articles

California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps

California's epic wildfires affect thousands of people each year, with many experiencing disruption, displacement, and loss. The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and Disaster Healthcare Volunteers systems are lifelines for many in need, and again this year have stepped up to help communities affected by disasters. Sometimes we forget though, that animals are also among the victims during disasters. Whether they be wildlife, food production animals, companion animals, horses, or others, a disaster is indiscriminate. Did you know that California has a MRC that specializes in just animals? We do! It is called the California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps, or the CAVMRC.

The CAVMRC is unique not only in that it is composed of veterinary professionals who exclusively provide veterinary care to animals in disaster responses, but also in that it is the **ONLY** statewide MRC. With over 2,600 volunteer veterinarians, registered veterinary technicians, veterinary assistants, and students, the CAVMRC is the largest veterinary medical reserve corps in the country. The CAVMRC helps all species of domestic animal across the state—everything from a mouse to a cow. Of course, most of the animals that the CAVMRC serves are companion animals like dogs, cats, and horses, but cattle, chickens, sheep, goats, alpacas, lizards, rabbits, and others have also been helped over the years. Registered in 2009, the CAVMRC has responded to several major wildfires in the state at the request of a county animal services authority under the direction of the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA). Most recently, the CAVMRC deployed to the Caldor Fire in El Dorado County.

For 19 days, the CAVMRC deployed volunteers to work 12-hour day shifts to help at six emergency animal shelter locations in

El Dorado and Amador counties between late August and early September. A total of 67 volunteers provided a combined 1,228 hours of volunteer service to provide free veterinary care to animals in need. Unlike many fire response deployments in the past, the CAVMRC treated relatively few burned animals in the Caldor fire. Instead, the lion share of cases involved medical management of



pre-existing health conditions, upper respiratory issues due to poor air quality, heat stress, and stress-related gastrointestinal disorders. Our volunteers provided care to several species of animals including sheep, goats, horses, ducks, chickens, tortoises, dogs, and cats.

Following the Caldor deployment, the CAVMRC held its annual Fall Training in person in November 2021 in Santa Rosa, CA. Nearly 200 attendees filled the room to capacity to learn about the latest in veterinary burn care, smoke inhalation and trauma management, reducing animal stress in shelters, animal shelter biosecurity, and deployment in the CAVMRC. Attendees earned valuable continuing education credit for a low cost.

Contra Costa County Medical Reserve Corps

Contra Costa County Medical Reserve Corps says farewell to an amazing MRC Leader, Lisa Vajgrt-Smith. Lisa has led the Contra Costa MRC since 2014, providing outstanding leadership, support, and dedication to the team. She has been an integral part of the Emergency Management System in Contra Costa County. Lisa's past accolades are vast but, here are just a few of the many efforts that she led with her amazing team of CCC MRC Volunteers:

Contra Costa County MRC



Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities

- Public Mass Flu Clinics
- PGE PSPS
- CZU Complex Wildland Fire – Mutual Aid Response
- Kincaid Fire, Napa County Evac. Shelters Med OPS
- Glass Fire, Napa County – Mutual Aid Response
- Napa County COVID Testing Drive Through Clinic – Mutual Aid Response
- Community CPR Train the Trainer
- Community First Aid/AED Training
- Stop the Bleed Trainings
- COVID-19 Mission Response
 - Imperial County COVID19 ACS Unit Support
 - CCC Skilled Nursing Facilities
 - Craneway ACS, Richmond, CA
 - CON Fire COVID Vaccine Response POD
 - Community Equity COVID Vaccine Clinics
- Hands on Disaster Preparedness Training
 - Dozier Libbey HOSA
 - Heritage High HOSA



Lisa's presence will be missed. We wish her the best in her new endeavor and look forward to continuing this amazing work.



With this transition, Contra Costa has a new MRC Coordinator, Theresa Dade-Boone.

Theresa brings with her experience as Contra Costa Health Services' (CCHS) Volunteer Program Coordinator and as former Director of School Health Centers in the West Contra Costa Unified School District. She looks forward to focusing her efforts on creating full transparency about the MRC work and to continue to collaborate and serve.

The MRC has a wonderful history of supporting events, and activities, as well as disasters. With their knowledge and expertise, we will be expanding their role, clinically, by providing them with additional training and understanding of the Public Health Department. This will provide the MRC access to more volunteer opportunities in CCHS vaccine, testing and equity clinics. CCHS staff will be providing clinical expertise to help with training and support as needed until we recruit and hire a complimentary MRC clinical lead.



We are very thankful of our MRC Volunteers and all that they do and look forward to making a full transition to continue to support community.

Sonoma County MRC

Sonoma County MRC would like to recognize MRC member Inga Askamit who volunteered at Sonoma County office of education (SCOE) clinics to vaccinate staff last year. Inga represents many recently retired RN's who helped out during COVID-19. Please see Inga's excerpts below.

"Inside the brand-new high school gymnasium, I was directed to the glass, mirrored, and barred dance studio for my assignment. When the lead nurse came in, I proudly displayed my Medical Reserve Corps volunteer badge and stated my name.

"After a too-brief orientation, I was ready to draw, I took the vial of Moderna vaccine in



my hands as if it was an eggshell. Above all, I didn't want to do anything to harm the precious, lifesaving liquid."

"Having a supportive mentor, letting go of perfectionism, and doing instead of fretting were all key. So many years ago, It was my nursing instructors and experienced staff nurses who got me through. This time it was the bright capable students and now could help a fellow retired nurse figure it out, reclaiming the pleasure of helping others with my hard-earned clinical skills. I still had it."

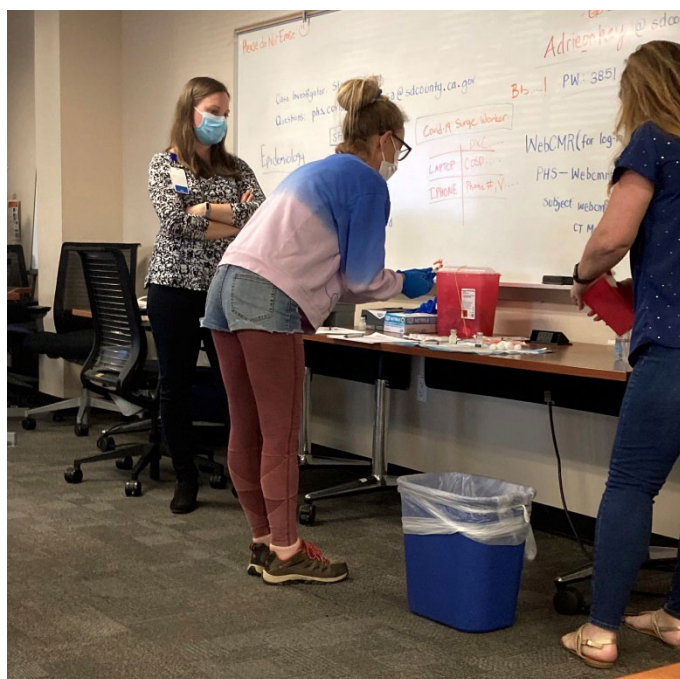
San Diego County Medical Reserve Corps

The San Diego County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is excited to announce a new specialty group: The **Medical Countermeasures** (MCM) team. MCM was started in December 2021. Expanded from the previously known Rapid Response Team, interested volunteers will be provided training opportunities and be involved in drills and exercises which will prepare them to be deployed to assist during potential public health emergencies. Public health emergencies may stem from naturally occurring or man-made disasters, including bioterrorism, environmental incidents, emergent disease, mass casualty incidents, and more.

MCM volunteers serve some of San Diego's most vulnerable populations and currently travel to congregate care settings to provide COVID-19 vaccinations to populations that are unable to travel due to the limitations they may have. Responsibilities of volunteers from the MCM team include vaccinating, monitoring guests following vaccination, and responding to all emergencies at the site.

To ensure a well-trained team, an onboarding session is required and provided monthly to new volunteers. Following the orientation, volunteers must attend further training and pass a skills competency check. MCM volunteers are also required to register through the Disaster Health Volunteers Site (DHV) and complete all San Diego MRC Unit requirements, which include, but are not limited to, submitting an active Basic Life Support certification, FEMA 100, and FEMA 700 National Incident Management System training completion certificates, and passing an interview. Volunteers are also registered with the California Disaster Service Worker Volunteer Program. As of March 2022, there are 21 fully screened and trained MCM volunteers and 77 who are currently interested in this enhanced program.

For more information on the MCM team, please contact mrc-volcoord.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov.



Online Disaster Training Opportunities

California is fortunate that over **105,500** volunteers are registered on the DHV System. Volunteers can be notified and given opportunities to serve in critical healthcare and non-healthcare positions when a disaster strikes in our State. As you are one of those who have made the commitment to register as a potential volunteer, you may want to take a next step and complete entry-level disaster training. There are on-line FEMA training opportunities you can complete on your own schedule.



To learn more about training classes and many other training opportunities, visit FEMA's Emergency Management Institute's website:

<http://www.training.fema.gov/EMI/>

IS-42.A: Social Media in Emergency Management

Link: <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=is-42.a>

Course Objectives:

- Explain why social media is important for emergency management.
- Describe the major functions and features of common social media sites currently used in emergency management.
- Describe the opportunities and challenges of using social media during the five mission areas of emergency management.
- Describe best practices for using social media during the five mission areas of emergency management.
- Describe the process for building social media capabilities and sustaining the use of social media in emergency management organizations (state, local, tribal, territorial).

IS-240.C: Leadership and Influence

Link: <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-240.c>

Course Objectives:

- Explain what leadership means for emergency personnel.
- Explain why effective leadership begins with personal insight and development.
- Identify your leadership capabilities and areas for personal development.
- Describe a change management model and the process for planning, communicating, and implementing changes.
- Describe how to build and rebuild trust in an organization.
- Use personal influence and develop political savvy to network and influence people effectively.
- Develop strategies for creating a positive work environment that fosters leadership and a commitment to continuous improvement in others.

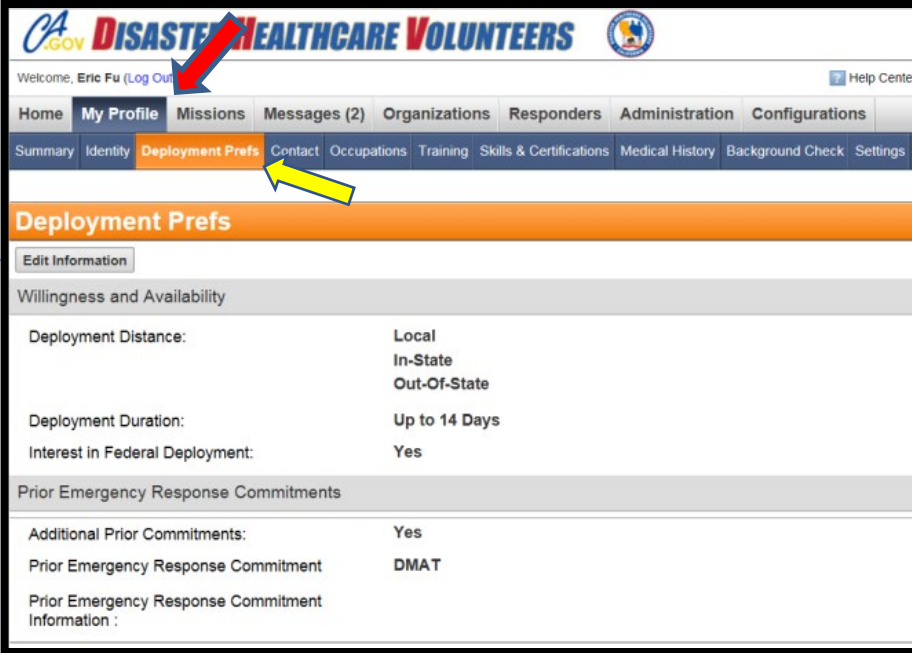
*Source: <https://training.fema.gov/is/crslist.aspx>

DHV “User Tips”

DHV Deployment Preferences: Responder Activity Preferences

DHV allows volunteers to set their activity preferences. To access the Deployment Preferences page, go to **My Profile: Deployment Prefs** the following page opens:

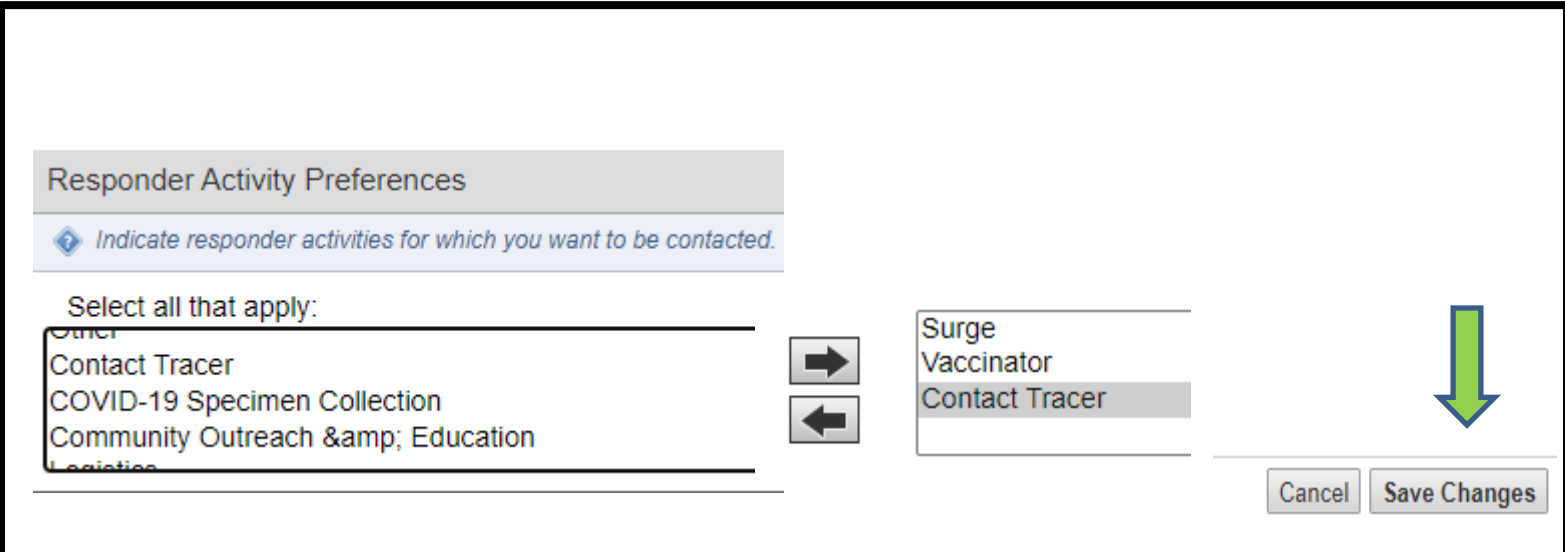
To edit your activity preferences, click the **Edit Information** button on the top left of the page



The screenshot shows the DHV (Disaster Healthcare Volunteers) web application interface. At the top, there's a header with the CA.GOV logo and the text "DISASTER HEALTHCARE VOLUNTEERS". Below the header is a navigation bar with tabs: Home, My Profile, Missions, Messages (2), Organizations, Responders, Administration, and Configurations. Under the "My Profile" tab, there are sub-tabs: Summary, Identity, Deployment Prefs (highlighted in orange), Contact, Occupations, Training, Skills & Certifications, Medical History, Background Check, and Settings. A red arrow points to the "My Profile" tab, a yellow arrow points to the "Deployment Prefs" sub-tab, and a green arrow points to the "Edit Information" button located below the "Deployment Prefs" sub-tab. The main content area is titled "Deployment Prefs" and contains a form with sections: "Willingness and Availability" (Deployment Distance: Local, In-State, Out-Of-State; Deployment Duration: Up to 14 Days; Interest in Federal Deployment: Yes) and "Prior Emergency Response Commitments" (Additional Prior Commitments: Yes; Prior Emergency Response Commitment: DMAT).

In Responder Activity Preferences, you can indicate responder activities for which you want to be contacted.

In this example, you selected “Surge, Vaccinator, and Contact Tracer”. Click **“Save Changes”** when you are finished.



The screenshot shows the "Responder Activity Preferences" form. It has a title bar "Responder Activity Preferences" and a subtitle "Indicate responder activities for which you want to be contacted." Below this, it says "Select all that apply:". There are two lists of activities. The left list contains: Other, Contact Tracer, COVID-19 Specimen Collection, Community Outreach & Education, and Logistics. The right list contains: Surge, Vaccinator, and Contact Tracer. A green arrow points to the "Save Changes" button at the bottom right. There are also "Cancel" and "Save Changes" buttons at the bottom right.



DHV is California's ESAR-VHP Program

The Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP) is a federal program created to support states and territories in establishing standardized volunteer registration programs for disasters and public health and medical emergencies.

Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV), California's ESAR-VHP program, administered at the state level, verifies health professionals' identification and credentials so that they can respond more quickly when disaster strikes. By registering through ESAR-VHP, volunteers' identities, licenses, credentials, and accreditations are verified in advance, saving valuable time in emergency situations.

Why Do We Need ESAR-VHP?

In the wake of disasters and public health and medical emergencies, many of our nation's health professionals are eager and willing to volunteer their services. In these times of crisis, hospitals, clinics, and temporary shelters are dependent upon the services of health professional volunteers. However, on such short notice, taking advantage of volunteers' time and capabilities presents a major challenge to hospitals, public health, and emergency response officials. For example, immediately after the attacks on September 11, 2001, tens of thousands of people traveled to ground zero in New York City to volunteer and provide medical assistance. In most cases, authorities were unable to distinguish those who were qualified from those who were not - no matter how well-intentioned.

There are significant problems associated with registering and verifying the credentials of health professional volunteers immediately following major disasters or emergencies. Specifically, hospitals and other facilities may be unable to verify basic licensing or credentialing information, including training, skills, competencies, and employment. Further, the loss of telecommunications may prevent contact with sources that provide credential or privilege information. The goal of the ESAR-VHP program is to eliminate a number of the problems that arise when mobilizing health professional volunteers in an emergency response.

Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV)

In accordance with federal mandate, California has developed the Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV) Program to facilitate and manage the registration, credentialing, and deployment of volunteer healthcare professionals (VHPs) in California. DHV uses a software system for the management of volunteers, including the registration, notification, communication, and credentialing needs associated with volunteer management. The DHV Program is the single source system operated and administered by local, regional, and State, public health, and emergency medical services agencies.

DHV is administered by all system stakeholders and managed by the California EMS Authority in partnership with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). DHV volunteers include healthcare professionals (medical, public health, mental health, EMS, and other personnel) who are willing to be called upon in the event of an emergency or disaster. DHV volunteers are pre-registered and pre-credentialed. Deployment of volunteers will follow Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) procedures.

To register on the DHV system or get more information, visit our website, www.healthcarevolunteers.ca.gov



Have You Updated Your DHV Registration Information Lately?

We depend upon each of you to update your DHV profile with your correct information. It is important that you take a moment to update your DHV System information when your information changes. Have you moved? Do you have a new occupation or a new employer? Have your email or phone numbers changed?

Please take a moment to update your file. Just log into www.healthcarevolunteers.ca.gov and click on the "Profile" tab. From there, you can navigate through your information. Click on "Edit Information" to make your changes and then be sure to click on "Save Changes" when you have completed your edits.

The DHV Journal is Published and Distributed Via Email

News and information for participants in the Disaster Healthcare Volunteers Program administered by EMSA and operated by System Administrators in local communities and Medical Reserve Corps Coordinators throughout California. This Journal is published and distributed periodically to the partners of the DHV Program.



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