Purpose

• Provide an introduction to the Medical Reserve Corps

• Discuss key issues pertaining to the establishment
Learning Objectives

• Describe the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) concept
• Discuss how MRC units vary depending on the needs of the local community
• Describe potential ways to get involved with local MRC units
Intended Audience

• Individuals interested in the MRC

• Medical and public health professionals

• Local government officials and other key stakeholder groups (e.g., hospital administrators and business leaders)

• Individuals interested in supporting community public health activities
MRC Vision

A nationwide network of organized volunteers strengthening the health and safety of their communities
Mission of the Medical Reserve Corps

The mission of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is to improve the health and safety of communities across the country by organizing public health, medical and other volunteers.
MRC Concept

• Establish groups of volunteers with interest in strengthening local public health system and providing help in emergencies

• Organize/utilize locally

• Integrate with existing programs and resources

• Identify, credential, train and prepare in advance

• Include medical and public health professionals, and others
MRC Concept

• Foster Community Resiliency!
  – Get all response partners to the table with a common goal
  – Strengthening the “everyday” public health system will improve community preparedness

• Prepared Communities
  → Prepared States
    → Prepared Nation
Local MRC Story
Upper Merrimack Valley (MA) MRC – May 2006 Flooding

BACKGROUND - A flooding disaster across New England had a major impact in the Upper Merrimack Valley (northwest of Boston, Massachusetts) in May 2006. A call-out of the MRC by the City of Lowell deployed 53 members of the UMV MRC, shortly after the needs were first identified by the director of the Board of Health in Lowell. The MRC unit served from May 15 to 17 in a variety of roles, and received the highest accolades afterwards. (See the web story at http://www.merrimackvalleymrc.org/latestnews/Flooddeployment/flooddeployment_06.htm)
History

• Following 9-11 attacks
  – Thousands of unaffiliated volunteers show up at sites
    • No way to ID or credential
    • Not covered under liability laws
    • No Incident Command System (ICS) training
    • Difficult to manage
• President George W. Bush 2002 State of the Union
• Partner program with White House’s USA Freedom Corps and DHS’ Citizen Corps
MRC Program Office

- Housed in the Office of the Surgeon General
- Supports local efforts to establish, implement, and sustain MRC units nationwide
- Goals:
  1. Providing effective national leadership and coordination
  2. Promoting awareness and understanding of the critical role that MRC units play in communities across the nation
  3. Enhancing the capacity of MRC units to achieve their local missions
Visit the MRC website http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/FindMRC.asp to find up-to-date information on the MRC unit in your community.
There are currently more than 120,000 MRC volunteers from a variety of health and medical professions, as well as other community volunteers (see chart below for volunteers according to professions):

**Number of MRC Members by Categories**

- Physicians: 13469
- Physician Assistants: 1456
- Nurse Practitioners: 2140
- Licensed Practical Nurses: 3867
- Pharmacists: 2763
- Mental Health Professionals: 28964
- EMT/Paramedics: 4349
- Dentists: 1393
- Veterinarians: 542
- Public Health Workers: 2350
- Other (Medical): 9436
- Other (Public Health): 1935
- Other (non-Medical/Public Health): 34239
How Can an MRC Benefit Your Community?

- Resiliency – not as reliant on state and national resources
- Meet identified health needs/gaps
- Bolster public health and emergency response infrastructures
- Give community members an opportunity to help make their communities healthier and safer
- Provide mechanisms for information sharing and coordination between partner organizations
- Allow for national recognition of local public health and emergency response efforts
MRC Models

• No “typical” MRC
• All MRC units:
  – Provide an organizational structure for managing and utilizing members
  – Pre-identify members
  – Screen members, including verification of professional licensure/certification
  – Train/prepare members
• Units vary by:
  – Types/#s of volunteers
  – Sponsor organizations
  – Partner organizations
  – Mission/focus
Why Not One Model?

- Local leaders determine the model that best fits their community needs
  - Population
  - Geography
  - Community government structure
  - Health needs
  - Other unique community factors
- Differing laws and local government structure
  - One “size” does not fit all
Volunteers

• Types/# of Volunteers - local decision based on local needs
• May include those in training, in active practice, or retired
• Medical and public health professionals
• Persons with no health experience who can help with communications, administration, logistics, and other essential functions
Sponsor Organizations

- Health Departments
- Boards of Health
- Medical Centers/Hospitals
- Medical Societies
- Emergency Management
- Citizen Corps Councils
- Police/Fire Departments
- Volunteer Centers
- Faith Based Organizations
- Regional Planning Groups
- Medical Societies
- Non-Profit Community Organizations
- Others…
Partners

- Health Departments
- Boards of Health
- Health Care Systems/Hospitals/Clinics
- Medical Retiree Groups
- Emergency Management
- Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs)
- Police and Fire Departments
- Community-Based Disaster Groups
- Healthcare Outreach Coalitions
- Retired and Senior Volunteer Programs
- Schools and Universities
- Emergency Medical Services
- Military Organizations/National Guard
- Neighborhood Associations
- City Attorney Offices
- Local Businesses/Corporations
- Others…
Mission/ Roles

• We encourage MRC unit leaders and members to serve as “Ambassadors” of the U.S. Surgeon General (SG)

…support SGs Priorities for Public Health

– Increase disease/injury prevention
– Eliminate health disparities
– Improve public health preparedness
– Promote Health Literacy
Roles

MRC members can have a profound impact on the health and safety of their community

• Examples:
  - Serve as MRC leaders
  - Provide medical care, administer vaccines and dispense medications
  - Provide health education as part of a local public health initiative
  - Provide counseling for victims, families and responders
  - Promote preparedness
  - Provide administrative, logistical and communications support
Recent MRC Activities:
Support Existing Public Health Resources

**Natrona Co (WY) MRC –**
Firefighter Rehabilitation Trailer Ongoing. When the fire department is called out to a fire, the NCMRC follows the fire units out with their trailer. The NCMRC provides rehabilitation services to the fire fighters and medical support staff. Over the last year the NCMRC has responded with their trailer at least 5 times – once for an 8-day response to the Jackson Canyon Fire (expend over 339 volunteer man hours).

**Nebraska/ Western Iowa (NE) MRC -**
College World Series 2005 and 2006. Provided medical care during the both World Series events.

**Virginia Beach (VA) MRC –**
Flu Vaccination Clinic for Homeless 1/25 & 1/26.
Virginia Beach Department of Human Services does a homeless Count each year in Virginia Beach. The VB Health Department asked the MRC to assist with the provision of flu shots to the homeless. Five MRC nurses were activated from 3pm-midnight on 1/25 and 8am-11am on 1/26 to give flu shots and take blood pressure. Volunteers sometimes worked without heat in the three tents set-up for the event.
Recent MRC Activities:
Support Existing Emergency Resources

**Bergen Co (NJ) MRC**
Point-of-Dispensing site TOPOFF 3. Volunteers, including pharmacists, participated in the POD activities for the TOPOFF 3 exercise.

**East Central Health District (GA) MRC** – FAA Exercise. The scenario was that two planes collided on the runway and that the victims had fuel contamination. The ECHD MRC was called out in support of the NDMS unit during this exercise. MRC volunteers provided triage and treatment of victims.

**Albuquerque (NM) MRC** – Evacuee Shelter – 2005 Hurricane Response. Volunteers performed a variety of roles – provided primary care triage, assisted with public health surveillance and epidemiology of patients, collected ongoing data regarding suspected infectious syndrome, as well as others.
Other Recent MRC Activities

Visit the Did You Know section of the MRC website to read more on recent activities MRC units have held to make a difference in their communities.
Ways to get involved

- Volunteer
- Partner
- Establish
How To Volunteer with a Local MRC

• Get in touch with local unit
• If there is no unit in your area, talk to local leaders (i.e. health department, board of health or emergency management agency) about starting an MRC unit in your community
1. Visit Find MRC Units
2. Select a state and click Go…
Finding a Local MRC - 2

3. A list of units within that state will come up

4. Click on the unit name that you are interested in…
5. Scroll through the page to view unit information, including contact information and a list of recent activities.
How to Partner with a Local MRC

• Contact the unit coordinator to learn what roles have already been identified for volunteers
• Work with the local unit to determine how you can partner with the local unit
  – Additional types of volunteers would be needed, what training would be needed/could be provided
  – Other types of resources MRC may need
  – Incidents you may need MRC to respond to
How to Establish an MRC Unit

• Determine/assess community needs
• Partner with local key stakeholders to organize and establish an MRC unit that is right for your community
• Consult the MRC Technical Assistance Series – a guide to get you started
• Talk with other MRC units in your region – they have valuable information on what is takes to start an MRC
• Contact Regional and State MRC Coordinators
Resources and Support Available

• MRC Program Office
  – National website with message board and Promising Practices section and much more…. www.medicalreservecorps.gov
  – National Newsletter – MRC InFocus
  – Technical Assistance Series
  – National Leadership and Training Conference
  – National topic-focused working groups
  – Outreach to national partner organizations
    • NACCHO
    • NALBOH
    • MRC-TRAIN
    • Others…

• Regional Coordinators
  – Technical assistance by phone, e-mail, or in person
  – Newsletter
  – Regional meetings

• Other MRC Units
  – Statewide meetings

• State Coordination
For More Information:

• MRC Program Office:
  Tel. (301) 443-4951
  MRCcontact@hhs.gov
  www.medicalreservecorps.gov

• MRC Regional Coordinators:
  http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/Coordinators/Regional

• MRC State Coordinators:
  http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/Coordinators/State