

## State Expert Panels

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In order to achieve consistency and integration across the state in the implementation of the Wisconsin Hospital Emergency Preparedness Program (WHEPP), it was decided that protocols to address emergency response issues be developed by State Expert Panels. Members recruited from across the state for these State Expert Panels have been topic experts with “boots-on-the-ground” experience.

These panels involve the best minds and the most experienced professionals in each topic area. The State Expert Panels have ensured that there is not only consistency of preparedness protocols across the State, but also and, most importantly, that there is integration of the preparedness plans with all of the other emergency response organizations, funded by various federal organizations. This is because all State Expert Panels attempt to have representatives from all necessary disciplines, as appropriate, for the Panel’s mission.

### **State Expert Panels that either have completed work or continue to meet include:**

**State Expert Panel on Isolation** made recommendations for minimum number of Airborne Infection Isolation Rooms at all hospitals and developed policies on the management of patients with infectious disease and the use of Medical Powered Air Purifying Respirators.

**State Expert Panel on Isolation Surge Capacity** made engineering recommendations regarding how hospitals could increase negative pressure surge capacity. The panel also developed policies for the deployment of these areas.

**State Expert Panel on Decontamination** made recommendations for decontamination equipment and training.

**State Expert Panel on Disposal of Decontamination Wastewater** developed a plan for all hospitals to consider regarding the various options available for the disposal of wastewater during the decontamination process.

**State Expert Panel on Disaster Credentialing** planned and developed the guidance for the deployment of a real-time credentialing and privileging system that meets Joint Commission standards for the deployment of registered and spontaneous volunteers.

**State Expert Panel on Disaster Ethics** identified ethical issues that will arise in a disaster and the values governing the implementation of related decisions. The Panel developed a guidance document aimed at creating a dialog with clinicians and the public. The panel is taking a leadership role in a statewide discussion with healthcare professionals and the public about these ethical issues.

**State Expert Panel on Disaster Reimbursement** developed recommendations from the provider and payer community regarding reimbursement and payment issues that may arise in a disaster situation.

**State Expert Panel on the Evacuation of Healthcare Facilities** developed recommendations for the evacuation or shelter-in-place of hospitals for emergency preparedness for nursing homes, assisted living facilities, group homes, and other congregate living facilities.

**State Expert Panel on Inpatient/Outpatient Surge Capacity** developed recommendations for on-site care treatment of a surge of inpatients along with recommendations for the care and treatment of ambulatory patients during a surge.

**State Expert Panel on Communications** recommended that hospitals have four levels of telecommunications redundancy.

**State Expert Panel on Patient Tracking** developed recommendations for the manual and electronic tracking of patients by EMS and hospitals in a disaster.

**State Expert Panel on Disaster Preparedness for Physician Offices/Clinics** developed recommendations for physicians and their office staff on emergency preparedness initiatives that can be implemented in the office setting.

**State Expert Panel on Pediatric Preparedness** is making recommendations on how to increase treatment capacity for pediatric patients. EMS personnel now have the opportunity to receive training on the treatment of pediatric victims.

**State Expert Panel on Finance** has identified cost and reimbursement issues that hospitals and EMS may face in a disaster.

**State Expert Panel on Radiation Emergencies** has completed recommendations for hospitals on the management of patients exposed to or contaminated with radiological agents. The panel is developing similar recommendations for EMS.

**State Expert Panel on Ventilator Capacity** made recommendations on enhancing ventilator capacity at hospitals. Respiratory Therapists and bio-medical staff are receiving training on the use of recommended ventilators.

**State Expert Panel on Materials Management** is developing recommendations on the deployment of the State's Stockpile when the normal supply chain is disrupted. The stockpile will include additional medical/surgical supplies and pharmaceuticals for surge capacity beds and processes for re-supplying hospitals.

**State Expert Panel on Human Resources** has developed template policies for hospitals on the deployment of registered and spontaneous volunteers and a template policy on employees who want to serve as volunteers.

**State Expert Panel on Occupational Health** is preparing guidelines for hospitals and other organizations on caring for the caregivers in the event of a pandemic or mass casualty incident.

**State Expert Panel on Healthcare Facilities** is developing recommendations for emergency preparedness standards, education, training, and exercises for non-hospital healthcare facilities.

**Surge Linen Demonstration Project Workgroup** is overseeing a demonstration project to determine various options to supply linens, towels, etc. to support the surge beds deployed by hospitals during a surge situation.

**Community Physician Advisory Council** reviews hospital preparedness initiatives from the physician perspective and makes recommendations regarding these initiatives.

**State Expert Panel on Dispatch** developed a template policy of consistent protocols for implementation at 9-1-1 dispatch centers. The template covers multiple victim incidents, surge capacity and mass casualty incidents with the goal that all emergency responders, including dispatch centers follow the same “play book”.

**State Expert Panel on Fatality Management** (*new in FY 2007<sup>1</sup>*) will develop a policy and procedure guidance document for the multi-disciplinary management of fatalities in a disaster. The panel will also offer hospital-specific policies.

**State Expert Panel on Behavioral Health** (*new in FY 2007*) will make recommendations to hospitals for the management of a large number of patients that are exhibiting behavioral health consequences as the result of a disaster.

**State Expert Panel on Distribution of Medical Countermeasures** (*new in FY 2007*) will collaborate with the CDC Public Health Preparedness Program on policy and procedure recommendations for the distribution and dispensing of medical countermeasures to be made available to hospitals in the event of pandemic influenza.

**State Expert Panel on Nutrition** (*new in FY 2007*) will be developing recommendations for a menu of food and drink to serve in hospitals and other health care facilities during a sustained incident. The panel will also offer recommendations on the inventory that will be required for at least a seven day incident.

**State Expert Panel on Palliative Care** (*new in FY 2007*) will identify the issues involved in caring for large numbers of patients who may need palliative care. The panel will develop recommendations on how to address this situation during a pandemic or mass casualty incident.

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<sup>1</sup> The FY 2007 for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Preparedness and Response (ASPR) from whom the hospital preparedness funds are received runs from September 1, 2007 through August 9, 2008.