

Emergency Readiness for People with Medical and Health Challenges

Supplementary Materials and Ideas for Trainers

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Introduction

Emergencies can happen at a moment's notice; when an emergency occurs, medical and health conditions can add complications and can create specific needs that individuals need to address to be able to respond to an emergency. For example, what would you do if the power went out and you rely on medical equipment that requires electricity? What if a disaster requires you to evacuate and you lose access to pharmacies, hospitals, or doctor's offices for a period of time?

Protecting yourself and your family when disaster strikes requires, above all else, planning ahead. For everyone, proper preparation includes assembling a survival kit (or "GoBag"), making an emergency plan with your family, and knowing how to stay informed. In this module, we've compiled resources for people with medical or health conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, or Alzheimer's and their caregivers to best prepare for and manage communications during a disaster or other emergency. Resources include checklists for proper documentation of personal and medical information, preparing yourself and your medical equipment for a disaster, stocking medications and ensuring medications are safe for use after a disaster, and how to stay informed and communicate during an emergency.

[Note: The contents herein are beta (draft) versions and have been developed exclusively for educational purposes.]

Opener: Think-Pair Share Expand

[Think-pair-share-expand is a collaborative learning strategy where learners work together to solve a problem or add to solutions. This strategy requires learners to (1) think individually about a topic the instructor wants to raise; and (2) share ideas with a single colleague, and then the group.]

People with chronic medical issues are at special risk in disaster and emergency situations. How can they make sure that the medications they rely on will be available if they have to evacuate? How can they arrange for the medical equipment they use at home to be available wherever they end up? How can they make sure that the medical personnel they encounter will know enough about their disease or condition, their prescriptions, their health regimens?

There are a number of ways in which people living with significant health issues can enhance their readiness for the emergencies and disasters that they might encounter. For example:

- (1) They can make copies of all their prescriptions and keep them in waterproof envelopes in a kit available for quickly evacuating.
- (2) They can carry around a wallet size card containing information about them, their conditions, their physicians, their medications, etc.

These ideas are just the tip of the iceberg of the many things a well-prepared individual might do before a situation hits the fan. In the space below, please jot down a few of your own ideas about how to enhance the readiness of people who are medically vulnerable and be prepared to share ideas with colleagues.

Annotated Curated Videos

- **[Emergency Preparedness, Medications | UCLA Health](#)**
[Emergency Preparedness](#): How people who have special medical needs that require specific medications, or oxygen should prepare for an emergency. Includes packing a go bag with all medical supplies and instructions and ensuring alternative power for medical devices.
 - (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jY1jabsSrg>)
- **[Preparing Makes Sense for People with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs](#)**: A unique instructional video containing information specific to Americans with disabilities or other access and functional needs regarding emergency preparedness. Video includes interpretation in ASL.
 - (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLuuTT532IE&feature=emb_logo)
- **[How to Pack Your Diabetes Emergency Kit](#)**: Learn how to prepare your diabetes emergency kit properly with this step-by-step video. Also includes links to a checklist of materials in both English and Spanish.
 - (<http://mydiabetesemergencyplan.com/patients>)
- **[Evacuation Procedures – Aged Care](#)**: This short video looks at how to evacuate a healthcare facility for the elderly. The video covers the RACE technique – **R**emove, **A**lert, **C**ontain, **E**vacuate.
 - (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-d_wrJ8ALY)
- **[FEMA Accessible: HHS Emergency Prescription Assistance Program](#)**: A video about the Department of Human and Health Services Emergency Prescription Assistance Program, how you can be eligible, and how the program works. Video is in ASL with closed captioning.
 - (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrSKZts_HRE)
- **[Access & Functional Needs ShakeOut – People Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision](#)**: There are specific steps people who are blind and people with low vision can take to plan for their own safety and the safety of loved ones in case of an earthquake. This video includes audio description for people who are blind or have low vision.
 - (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjpT9MRfhls>)

- **Three Tips: Medication Safety During an Emergency**: Make your medications a part of your emergency planning. What will you do if you lose your medicines? What if they are destroyed? And what will you do with your medicines that need to be kept cold when your power goes out? Follow these three tips to help make sure your medicines are properly stored and easily replaced in the wake of an emergency.
 - (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekwiXoWIYk8>)
- **Preparing for the Unexpected: Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities**: This recorded webinar highlights the importance of being proactive with preparing and the specific steps to take to ensure that you are ready for the unexpected. The presenter provides preparedness tips surrounding specific disabilities, such as blind/low vision, deaf/hard of hearing, cognitive disabilities, etc. *Note: This video is one hour long. It will likely not be shown during the class but could be offered as a resource.*
 - (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJyV6nQ7NLo>)
- **Planning for a Power Outage when on Home Oxygen**: Patients on home oxygen need to consider how they will need to respond to potential power outages in their homes.
 - (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWnrfhSktxw>)

Annotated Guides and Publications

- **Disaster Planning Toolkit for People with Dementia**: This manual was created for people with dementia. Not only does it provide general planning information, but it also includes a checklist and a place to store contact and medical information. Family members and caregivers may also find this manual useful, as it recognizes needs specific to people with dementia.
 - (https://eccog.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/12125NADRCdisasterplanToolkit_0.pdf)
- **Preparedness Toolkit for Blind or Visually Impaired Residents**: What would you do after a major disaster, such as a hurricane or a tornado, if you had no water, no food, no electricity, no transportation, and no telephone? This document outlines considerations for people who are blind.

- (http://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/eh-preparedness/_documents/BEH_DBSPrepToolkit.pdf)
- **[Staying Connected in a Changing Environment](#)**: This resource helps those with ALS prepare for a potential medical emergency. It includes information on how to pack a go bag, what to include in a medical information packet, preparing communication boards, and how to keep in touch with family and friends in case of hospitalization during the coronavirus pandemic, as they are not allowed in emergency vehicles or hospital rooms.
 - (<https://www.als.byf1.io/sites/default/files/2020-06/Staying-Connected-In-a-Changing-Environment-2020.pdf>)
- **[Making Community Emergency Preparedness Response Programs Accessible to People with Disabilities](#)**: Aimed at local governments and response programs, this guide uses illustrations and action steps to explain special considerations for inclusive emergency response planning. It would also be helpful to cover possible solutions with persons with disabilities who find themselves in a difficult situation during an emergency.
 - (<https://www.ada.gov/emerpreguideprt.pdf>)
- **[Capacity-Building Toolkit for including Aging & Disability Networks in Emergency Planning](#)**: Extensive details and information on how others can plan for ensuring the aging or disabled populations in their community are safe during an emergency situation.
 - (<https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Capacity-Building-Toolkit-for-Aging-and-Disability-Networks-2-5-19.pdf>)
- **[Document and Insure your Property](#)**: This resource provides basic information about insurance and insurance claims in case of a disaster, including decoding insurance jargon, instructions for how to take inventory of your home, understanding what an insurance policy may or may not cover, and tips for how to ensure a claim goes smoothly.
 - (https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/ready_document-and-insure-your-property.pdf)

Downloadable and Adaptable Online Materials (Not in PDF)

- **Detailed Health Information Form:** Includes information on medication, doctors, supplements, insurance, etc. In Word format so can be adjusted to specific populations or house additional information.
 - (<http://images.huffingtonpost.com/2009-04-06-20090402LaPookHealthForm.doc>)
- **Disaster Information for People with Chronic Conditions and Disabilities:** Information on special considerations regarding various medical conditions when emergency planning. Great resource for reviewing a number of conditions that may affect you or someone in your community.
 - (<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/chronic.html>)
- Also check out the attachments at the end of this module and feel free to adapt them as you see fit!

Fillable Forms

- **Health Profile Form:** Originally created to support people with disabilities, this health profile form houses important information for others to know about an individual such as communication needs, dietary restrictions and allergies, list of medications, devices or aids, and what might upset the person. The form could be carried with an individual on a daily basis or added to an emergency go bag. It is also available in 5 other languages, [here](#).
 - (**English:** https://www.listocalifornia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/508_LIS_026_050520_IDD_health_profile_dAf.pdf)
 - (**Other languages:** <https://www.listocalifornia.org/prepare-your-community/toolkit/>)
- **Complete Care Plan:** This form stores information about a person's current medical condition and treatment. It includes space for health insurance information, providers, and preferred healthcare facilities. It also has a checklist of other important considerations to discuss with

loved ones and healthcare providers, such as living wills and power of attorney.

- (<https://www.cdc.gov/aging/caregiving/pdf/Complete-Care-Plan-Form-508.pdf>)
- **Emergency ID Card for People with Cancer**: A fillable card for people to carry in their wallet that can provide others with pertinent life-saving information regarding the person with cancer.
 - (https://www.cancer.net/sites/cancer.net/files/emergency_info_card.pdf)
- **Emergency Medical Information Card**: This is a simple card that can be filled out on the computer, printed, and then placed in your wallet so that you always have it with you. It houses key information for emergency responders such as name, address, emergency contacts, physicians, medical history, medications, and allergies.
 - (http://www.workingservicedog.com/images/blog/walletcard.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2D6idVHnO2LMjlnEx3LBnqPtBuW8SZqLvAL_IOoW0kuCwLxtR7-t-Ch8w)
- **My Medical Conditions and Care Needs**: This form tracks not only basic medical information, but also information on assistive devices, Alzheimer's/dementia symptoms, service animals, and vaccinations. The text is in large print for ease of visibility.
 - (<https://pblob1storage.blob.core.windows.net/public/nadrc/docs/NADRCdisasterplanMedCond508readonly.pdf>)
- **My Important Contacts**: Building on the form above, this form houses contact information for trusted friends, neighbors and family. It also tracks service providers and has information on creating a communication plan with contacts in case of a disaster or other emergency. The text is also in large print for ease of visibility.
 - (<https://pblob1storage.blob.core.windows.net/public/nadrc/docs/NADRCdisasterplanContacts508readonly.pdf>)
- **Cancer Survivorship Care Plan**: The CDC recommends that those with cancer include a cancer survivorship care plan in a disaster or emergency preparedness kit so that all of your cancer treatment information and history is in one place. This form can be printed and filled, and then added to your go bag.
 - (http://mncanceralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/SurvivorCarePlan3202012_Final.pdf)

Free Pamphlets and Checklists

- **[Emergency Preparedness for People with Chronic Diseases:](https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/pdf/infographics/emergency-H.pdf)** Short introductory document, includes tips to prepare for an emergency, and links to additional information for specific diseases.
 - (<https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/pdf/infographics/emergency-H.pdf>)
- **[Emergency Checklist for People with Cancer:](https://www.cancer.net/sites/cancer.net/files/emergency_checklist.pdf)** One-page checklist of considerations a person with cancer should review in preparation for an emergency.
 - (https://www.cancer.net/sites/cancer.net/files/emergency_checklist.pdf)
- **[Diabetes Preparedness Plan:](https://www.diabeteseducator.org/docs/default-source/living-with-diabetes/ddrc_patient_preparedness_plan.pdf?sfvrsn=2)** Checklist for people who have diabetes to ensure they are ready for a disaster and have enough insulin supplies.
 - (https://www.diabeteseducator.org/docs/default-source/living-with-diabetes/ddrc_patient_preparedness_plan.pdf?sfvrsn=2)
- **[3-Day Emergency Diet Plan:](https://www.kcercoalition.com/contentassets/6270a03f0aef48ee8bb83100f04e37f2/kcer_-3-day-emergency-diet_final_508.pdf)** This checklist has information about what food to stock in case of an emergency for those in need of dialysis. While it does not replace dialysis, following this strict diet can help reduce the buildup of water and waste in your body if treatment is unavailable due to a disaster or other emergency.
 - (https://www.kcercoalition.com/contentassets/6270a03f0aef48ee8bb83100f04e37f2/kcer_-3-day-emergency-diet_final_508.pdf)
- **[High Blood Pressure & Emergency Preparations:](https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/pdf/hypertension.pdf)** This one-page checklist contains special considerations for those with high blood pressure or hypertension, which should be kept in mind when preparing for and responding to disasters or other emergencies.
 - (<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/pdf/hypertension.pdf>)
- **[Emergency Power Planning for People who Use Electricity and Battery-Dependent Assistive Technology and Medical Devices:](#)** Disasters and other emergency situations often leave us without electricity. A lack of electricity is more than an inconvenience; if you depend on medical devices or assistive technologies that are powered by electricity, losing power can be a perilous event. This checklist serves as a guide for people who use technologies such as respirators, powered wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, and more. It outlines

how to ensure that your technology will remain functional in an emergency situation.

- (https://adata.org/sites/adata.org/files/files/ADANN_Emergency_Power_planning-2016LP.pdf)
- **Prescriptions – Preparing Your Medical Cabinet for an Emergency**: Short resource with information on stocking a medical cabinet with prescriptions and other medications in case of an emergency. There is also information on safe storage of medications.
 - (https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/npm/00_documents/2019/CPR_PrepMonth_PersonHealthPrep_prescriptions_blog.pdf)
- **Emergency Prescription Assistance Program**: The Emergency Prescription Assistance Program, or EPAP, helps people in a federally identified disaster area who do not have health insurance get the prescription drugs, vaccinations, medical supplies, and equipment that they need. People who are eligible can file claims for prescription items that were lost, stolen, or destroyed because of a disaster at over 72,000 retail pharmacies cross the U.S. Information sheet is also available in Spanish.
 - (**English:** <https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/epap/Documents/epap-infographic-ENG.pdf>)
 - (**Spanish:** <https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/epap/Documents/epap-infographic-SPANISH.pdf>)
- **Preparing Makes Sense for Older Americans**: This four-fold pamphlet describes the basic steps for preparing older Americans for disasters and emergencies, including getting a kit, making a plan and staying informed.
 - (https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/older_americans.pdf)

Possible Sub-topics

- Caregiver preparedness and support during emergencies
- Communication with family and caregivers during and after a disaster
- Disaster preparation for senior citizens with Alzheimer's or dementia
- Disaster preparation for senior citizens with disabilities
- Additional considerations for people with disabilities and other access and functional needs
- Assistive technologies and how to maintain them during a disaster

- Additional considerations for service animals
- Food and water safety during and after a disaster
- Power outage safety
- Emergency preparedness for assisted living and healthcare facilities
- Managing chronic conditions during a disaster
- Navigating Medicare and FEMA assistance in the wake of a disaster

Possible Workshop Handouts

- **Emergency Supply Checklist**: A good introduction to what supplies everyone should have on hand in case of an emergency. The list would need to be customized or added to for those with medical and health challenges.
 - (https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2021-01/ready_emergency-supply-kit-checklist.pdf)
- **Disaster Plan Worksheet**: Very detailed form that provides prompts to discuss emergency contacts, who can pick your children up from school, what items you would like saved from your house, emergency alert information, and more.
 - (https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=2ahUKEwjnzpaHtZjoAhXNvJ4KHSj3B0EQFjAAegQIBBAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ebmud.com%2Findex.php%2Fdownload_file%2Fforce%2F1102%2F220%2F%3Fdisasterworksheet_fact.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2O8lLcLBEcifjpe-a7TRxl)
- **Communication Board for an Emergency Medical Situation**: The double-sided board contains vocabulary to support the patient and paramedic to express and understand messages relating to the medical situation. This communication board was developed as a tool to enhance communication between Paramedics and patients with complex communication needs at the first point of contact in an emergency medical situation.
 - (https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0028/58375/medical-signing-board.pdf)
- **Emergency Checklist for People with Cancer or Other Illness**: A simple, seven-step checklist on how people with cancer or other illness should prepare in the event of an emergency.
 - (https://www.cancer.net/sites/cancer.net/files/emergency_checklist.pdf)

- **Emergency Preparedness for People with Chronic Illness**: This one-page handout has 3 basic tips to prepare, as well as information on where to learn more for those with cancer, diabetes, epilepsy or high blood pressure.
 - (<https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/pdf/infographics/emergency-H.pdf>)
- **Do's and Don'ts for Community Disaster Preparedness**: Want to get more involved? This short checklist outlines how you can be prepared yourself and help others to be prepared in your workplace or community.
 - (http://www2.ku.edu/~rrtcpbs/resources/pdf/b_communicity_preparedness.pdf)

Suggested Group Activities

- Fill out an emergency supply list: Customize the list for specific medical needs, including power sources, medications, and dietary considerations. Have participants submit a photo of their compiled kit within a week of the class activity.
- Fill out an emergency plan: Use a worksheet above to have participants fill out emergency contact information and communication plans, ensuring they are customized to account for specific medical needs.
- Role play: Pair off and take turns “talking to your doctor or medical professional” about how to prepare for a disaster or emergency. Participants could brainstorm together a list of questions to ask their healthcare professionals.
- Online resource exploration: If internet and devices are readily available, have participants pair off and explore online resources for disaster and emergency planning, finding shelters and other resources, and staying informed in case of an emergency. A list is below to get them started.

Plausible Participant Behavioral Changes

- Participants have a complete emergency plan with important contact information and specific medical needs.
- Participants organize a support network if they require help evacuating.

- Participants identify an out-of-town emergency contact.
- Participants identify the most nutritious food they can include in their emergency kit and customize food for their medical needs.
- Participants create an emergency kit that incorporates their specific needs, including any medical needs.
- Participants become more aware of community, state, and federal resources that can provide medical assistance in times of emergency.
- Participants develop a communication plan for emergencies, including friends, relatives, caregivers, and healthcare providers that would need to be contacted.

Related Android Apps

- **[911HelpSMS App](https://www.911helpsms.com/)**: This app, available for both Apple and Android, allows you to text 9-1-1 dispatchers and automatically sends them an accurate GPS position of your location. It is great for allowing those with disabilities to easily communicate with first responders. You can also store family contacts, medical history, medications, and drug allergies on the app.
 - (<https://www.911helpsms.com/>)
- **[Smart911](https://smart911.com/)**: Similar to the app above, Smart911 allows you to create and fill out a profile, which would send information to 911 dispatchers if you were to call them. Users can fill out as much or as little of their profile as they want. Information includes household members, medical details, address and location information, and other information like special notes, pets, service animals, etc. Profiles can be filled out online or on their mobile application.
 - (<https://smart911.com/>)
- **[Emergency: Alerts by the Red Cross](#)**: The American Red Cross has a series of apps for disaster preparedness and emergency evacuation, including a general app for emergency updates (linked here), and specific apps for floods, earthquakes, tornadoes or hurricanes depending on which type of disaster occurs in your area, which can be found online. All apps are available for both Android and Apple and are available in [Spanish](#).
 - **(Google:** <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.cube.arc.hzd>)
 - **(Apple:** <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/emergency-by-american-red/id954783878>)

- **(Spanish:** <https://www.redcross.org/cruz-roja/obtener-ayuda/aplicaciones-moviles.html>)
- **FEMA Mobile Application:** The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) created this app to serve as a comprehensive tool for emergency alerts and preparedness. It sends alert notifications in case of emergency, offers safety tips for various kinds of disasters, and directs users to nearby shelters. Many users find it helpful for preparing for and managing after a disaster. It is also available in **Spanish.**
 - **(Google:** <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.fema.mobile.android&hl=en>)
 - **(Apple:** <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/fema/id474807486?mt=8>)
 - **(Spanish:** <https://www.fema.gov/es/aplicacion>)
- **ICE – In Case of Emergency:** This free app stores the information you might typically keep on a wallet card – such as blood type, medications, treatment information, etc. – on the lock screen of your phone. In the event of an emergency, first responders only need to look at your phone to learn of any important health issues. You can also include emergency contact information on the screen as well. One downside noted by some users is that the screen will display if you are an organ donor – which some may not feel comfortable disclosing.
 - (<http://icecontact.com/>)
- **Life360:** This app uses GPS to share your location with people of your choosing, such as family members or caretakers. It notifies them when you have arrived at and departed from a particular location. In an emergency situation, this app could help loved ones know your status. There is a basic version of the app that is free; a Driver Protect version costs \$7.99 per month provides roadside assistance and alerts your contacts if you are in a car accident.
 - (<https://www.life360.com/>)
- **Medical ID:** It isn't always practical to carry around medical paperwork. Furthermore, in the stress of an emergency or a disaster, it can often be hard to communicate important medical details. Some people may not be able to verbally communicate in the first place. Medical ID is an app that stores medical information – including emergency contacts, medication information, allergies, and medical conditions. It is accessible from the lock screen, meaning that the

user can view the information without needing to enter a password, thus saving valuable minutes. There is a basic version of the app that is free, and a premium version that costs \$6.99 and allows for more customization and data backup. The app is currently only available for Android/Google.

- (<https://medicalid.app/>)

Other Important Resources

- **[Blue Button Online Tool](#)**: This resource from Medicare.gov helps people locate and access their electronic health records from a variety of sources. You have a legal right to receive your personal health information. Blue Button is one of the ways this information may be made available to you. Look for the Blue Button symbol and ask your health care providers or health insurance company if they offer you the ability to view online, download, and share your health records. Also available in [Spanish](#).
 - **(English:** <https://www.medicare.gov/manage-your-health/medicares-blue-button-blue-button-20>)
 - **(Spanish:** <https://es.medicare.gov/manage-your-health/medicares-blue-button-blue-button-20>)
- **[Getting Care and Drugs in Disasters or Emergencies](#)**: A great resource for those with Medicare to help navigate health care and access to medications during a disaster or emergency. The webpage includes contact information for Medicare as well as links to specific information about prescriptions, dialysis, cancer treatment, and other medical needs. Also available in [Spanish](#).
 - **(English:** <https://www.medicare.gov/what-medicare-covers/getting-cancer-treatment-in-a-disaster-or-emergency>)
 - **(Spanish:** <https://es.medicare.gov/what-medicare-covers/getting-care-drugs-in-disasters-or-emergencies>)
- **[Sheltering in Place – Planning Resource Guide for Nursing Homes](#)**: When faced with the difficult decision of having to evacuate or stay in the long-term care center, many factors need to be considered. Sheltering in Place (SIP) is the preferred option, yet implementing this option calls for a complex chain of decisions and actions that requires these pre-event activities: Planning, Training, Preparation, Collaboration, Continual Vigilance, and Communication with Local Authorities. This guide provides examples and checklists

for what a care center can build into its existing Emergency Management Program.

- (https://www.ahcancal.org/Survey-Regulatory-Legal/Emergency-Preparedness/Documents/SIP_Guidebook_Final.pdf)

- **[Elderly Populations in Disasters: Hospital Guidelines for Geriatric Preparedness](#)**: This comprehensive manual is targeted towards hospitals to help them better serve and protect elderly patients in times of disaster. The manual includes links to different resources, best practices, and articles on elderly preparedness in general.
 - (<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.468.704&rep=rep1&type=pdf>)

Attachment A: Disaster Planning for People with Chronic Disease

Natural disasters, such as hurricanes, floods, tornados and wildfires, can be stressful and devastating for persons living with a chronic disease. Learn tips to help reduce the risk of illness or serious health complications in a disaster.

Be prepared for a disaster. Make an emergency plan and kit.

- Maintain at least a three-day supply of water, food, and medicine. Consider signing up for SMART911, Code Red, or your local county registry. These services help first responders identify people who may need assistance in a disaster.
- If you need to leave your home, know where to go (e.g., family members house, shelter) and be prepared to leave quickly. Have medicines, medical records, insurance information, and healthcare provider's information, with you.
- Ask your doctor for an extra supply of prescribed medicines, and have a list of all prescription medicines (including name, dose, and pharmacy information). If staying in a shelter or temporary housing, tell the staff about your health problems, special needs and any medicines you are taking.
- Keep medicines, supplies, and equipment out of the heat and in a safe and waterproof location. If you use medical equipment that works with electricity, learn [How to Prepare and Handle Power Outages](#).
- Check if the Emergency Prescription Assistance Program (EPAP) is activated after a disaster. This free service helps residents get medicine, medical supplies, medical equipment and vaccines that were lost, stolen, or damaged due to the disaster. Call 855-793-7470 to enroll or visit the EPAP website. Check [RX Open](#) to find open pharmacies.
- Take steps to avoid getting an infection or illness. Clean up, disinfect, and wash your hands often, and stay away from moldy or dirty places. If you do not have soap and clean water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Seek immediate medical care if a wound develops redness or swelling, or if you have other signs of infection, such as fever, increasing pain, shortness of breath, confusion, disorientation or high heart rate.

- During or after a natural disaster, it may be hard to find the food that you usually eat, particularly if you are on a special diet. Try to eat as healthy as possible by choosing foods that are lower in added sugars and salt.
- If you feel overwhelmed, reach out to family, friends, support groups, or a healthcare professional for support. Engaging in physical activity can help you to reduce stress, manage your condition and cope with a natural disaster.

Here are some examples of common chronic conditions and things you can do to keep you or a loved one safe during a disaster.

Heart Disease and Stroke

- Stress from a disaster can lead to heart disease symptoms. Know the signs and symptoms of heart attacks and stroke.
- Disasters may cause increases in blood pressure. Monitor your blood pressure regularly, particularly if you have high blood pressure. Learn more about [Measuring and Controlling Blood Pressure](#).
- Wildfire smoke and disaster-related air pollution can cause an increase in heart disease symptoms such as chest pain, heart attacks, difficulty breathing, abnormal heart beating, or worsening symptoms of heart failure, and stroke. Seek medical attention if you or someone you know is experiencing these symptoms.
- Get enough sleep to protect your heart health. Learn more about how not getting good sleep affects your heart health.

Diabetes

- Follow the [Diabetes Preparedness Plan](#). Store three days of diabetes supplies and consider having an extra glucagon emergency kit.
- Keep your insulin, supplies, and equipment in a safe location. Insulin remains usable for 28 days at room temperature up to 86°F. Learn how to store insulin.
- Check your feet every day for cuts, redness, swelling, sores, blisters, corns, calluses, or any other change to the skin or nails. Call a healthcare provider as soon as possible if you see an injury or wound.
- For more information visit the [Diabetes Disaster website](#) or call 1-800-342-2383.

Kidney Disease: Dialysis Care

- Call your dialysis center to see if they are open or your local health department. They may be able to assist with transportation to the dialysis center or recommend another location if yours is closed. If you need assistance or are having difficulty contacting your dialysis clinic, call the Kidney Community Emergency Response (KCER) Hotline at 1-866-901-3773.
- If you are unable to get your treatments, follow the 3-Day Emergency Diet. If you are pregnant or have an infant or child who is on dialysis, talk to your doctor or dietician about modifications to this diet. This plan could save your life or the life of your child.
- If you have a home dialysis machine, you may be able to do manual exchanges until the power comes back on. Consider buying a small backup generator so you have continuous power.

Cancer

- Have a summary of your cancer treatment plan including the type of cancer you have, treatment received and when, physician contact information, and a list of your medicines and doses.
- If you have a Cancer Survivorship Care Plan, bring it with you if you need to leave your home.
- If you are being treated with chemotherapy, watch for signs of an infection, such as chills and sweats, a sore throat or other pain, nasal congestion, or vomiting. Call a doctor right away, if you get a fever.
- Learn more about [How to Get Ready for a Natural Disaster When You Have Cancer](#) and [Coping with Cancer After a Natural Disaster](#). For more information, call the National Cancer Information Center at 800-227-2345.

Alzheimer's Disease and other Dementias

- Disasters can be especially upsetting and confusing for individuals with Alzheimer or related dementia. Be aware of signs of anxiety or agitation in persons with dementia and be prepared with strategies to calm them during times of stress.
- If you have a family member in a residential facility, find out about its disaster plans.
- When appropriate, share the diagnosis with others, such as hotel or shelter staff, family members and airline attendants, so they can better assist.

- Caregivers should be aware of the potential for individuals with dementia to wander. Try to stay together or with a group if evacuated. Do not leave the person with dementia alone.

The above information is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and can be found online [here](https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/features/disaster-planning-chronic-disease/index.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/features/disaster-planning-chronic-disease/index.html>).

We have also included links to many of the resources they refer to throughout this module.

Attachment B: What Can Chronically Ill Patients Do to Brace for Natural Disasters?

More than a year after Texas' most devastating hurricane, simply saying the word "Harvey" prompts a pause for reflection.

"It's amazing to see how people from the bottom of their hearts reached out to help each other in a crisis," said Dr. Tracie Kirkland, who cares for patients in Katy, Texas, a town 30 miles outside of Houston, while also teaching at the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work Department of Nursing.

With 95 major disasters declared in the state since 1953, Texans are all too familiar with the impact of emergencies on vulnerable communities. According to NASA, at least one major disaster is declared in Texas nearly every calendar year, meaning local residents are more likely to experience displacement and medical trauma than those elsewhere in the United States.

When disasters occur — in Texas and anywhere else — trauma prevention is often the focus of planning efforts, but medical providers have emphasized the need for more robust emergency response plans for communities in need.

Data from the CDC shows that people living with chronic conditions are among the most vulnerable communities, as they experience greater limitations with daily activities like walking or eating, and they are densely

populated in many of the states that are most susceptible to natural disasters.

In 2017, the United States endured 16 separate natural disasters with damage costs greater than \$1 billion — the highest number for any year on record. With the frequency and cost of natural disasters like hurricanes Harvey and María on the rise, experts say it's critical to give special attention to patients whose medical treatment plans will be disrupted in the wake of a natural disaster.

The Landscape of Chronic Conditions in the U.S.

Chronic conditions include any diagnosis that affects an individual for three or more months, and are responsible for seven out of every 10 deaths in the United States, according to the CDC. In 2015, the following conditions were the 10 most common chronic diagnoses in the United States, indicated by a recent report from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services:

- Hypertension
- Hyperlipidemia
- Arthritis
- Diabetes
- Ischemic heart disease
- Chronic kidney disease
- Depression
- Heart failure
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Alzheimer's disease

Among the most vulnerable populations for chronic conditions are children and older adults, two groups that often require caregivers. In the United States, more than 80 percent of older adults have at least one chronic condition, and about 50 percent have at least two. Managing multiple chronic conditions at once can be cumbersome and may increase the likelihood of complications.

Individuals across the life span with chronic conditions have specific care needs that put them at greater risk for life-threatening complications during the devastation of a natural disaster. According to Kirkland, these needs include:

- Around-the-clock care by a family member or licensed professional, depending on severity of diagnosis
- Frequent monitoring of vital signs and symptoms
- Medication taken with specific foods multiple times a day
- Frequent trips to specialists or primary care providers
- Equipment for monitoring or aiding bodily functions

“The psychological stress alone can increase a person’s risk of a heart attack,” Kirkland said, leaving people who are already at risk even more vulnerable.

The Impact of Natural Disasters

In the wake of a natural disaster, the complicated task of managing a chronic condition becomes even more challenging. People are sometimes tasked with finding resources or health care support while they are trapped in their homes or after they are forced to evacuate.

“The goal for first responders is always safety, but part of that safety is making sure people have their medication,” Kirkland said. “They might survive the initial rescue but could have an increased risk of death because they are missing medication.”

According to Kirkland, common challenges that complicate management of chronic diagnoses may include:

- Limited access to medical providers or medication for emergency prescriptions
- Disruption of care continuity when clinics close due to water and electrical damage
- Reduced mobility when carrying medical equipment like oxygen tanks
- Displacement from homes when individuals are forced to evacuate their residences

Kirkland said access to care “can mean life or death.” For example, people with renal failure require dialysis three or more times per week. People with epilepsy rely on strict adherence to medical treatment plans and consistent access to medication. People with diabetes depend on insulin and food to monitor blood sugar levels. But if patients can’t get to a clinic or if clinics lose power, their health will suffer.

Preparing for an Emergency

While many emergency response plans emphasize a provider's role in medical treatment, the reality of natural disasters proves that people don't always have continuous access to providers and should plan accordingly with a caregiver.

"A family member involved in chronic condition management must know how to assess for symptoms of acute patients and notice clinical changes that require more emergent care," Kirkland said.

According to Kirkland, people with chronic conditions can take direct steps toward preparing for natural disasters or emergencies, including the following:

- Maintain a 10-day supply of all necessary medications.
- Wear a bracelet that helps first responders identify an individual with a chronic condition or specific care requirement.
- Organize a supply of emergency food, battery-operated flashlights and a change of clothes.
- Have devices at home that monitor vital signs and changes in physical health.
- Ensure family members and close neighbors know how to administer care.
- Develop an evacuation plan, including identifying stable buildings in the community for shelter.
- Sign up for community warning systems for weather alerts.
- Organize communication with family members in the event of lost power.
- Create an updated list of emergency phone numbers for providers and medical facilities, and keep the list somewhere accessible.

Kirkland also suggested that caregivers ask questions during a loved one's annual physical, and spend one-on-one time with a provider to talk about at-home medical treatment plans. Just as hospitals and organizations have contingency plans for emergencies and evacuations, it's critical for individuals to develop reliable plans for themselves and their family members.

As a provider, establishing a trustworthy relationship with a patient is a venue for them to ask questions and feel supported in managing their

conditions, according to Kirkland. “Take any opportunity to solicit their thoughts,” she said.

Kirkland also encouraged providers to bring up contingency plans with their patients and become familiar with community resources so that they can educate patients about where to seek help after a natural disaster.

In Texas, camaraderie continues to bring residents together long after Harvey’s extensive destruction.

“People risked their lives to save one another,” Kirkland said. “Because the communities rallied around each other, they were able to save each other.”

Please note that this article is for informational purposes only. Individuals should consult a health care professional before following any of the information provided. For more information about preparing for natural disasters, visit the Department of Homeland Security.

This attachment came from: Nursing@USC, the online FNP program from the University of Southern California, which can be found online [here](https://nursing.usc.edu/blog/chronic-conditions-natural-disaster/) (https://nursing.usc.edu/blog/chronic-conditions-natural-disaster/).

Attachment C: Key Information to Record and Keep Handy

Name:
Address:
Phones:
Email:

Support/contact (parent/relative) person:
Name:
Address:
Phones:
Email:

Alternate contact person – not local:
Name:
Address:
Phones:
Email:

Medical history and diagnosis' I live with:

Immediate care issues (including service animal needs):

Medical issues:

Specialized care issues and requirements:

Primary Medical Insurance Carrier:
Policy#:

Allergies:
Blood Type:

Medical Contacts:

Dr (Primary):

Name:

Address:

Phones:

Dr:

Name:

Address:

Phones:

Prescriptions necessary for daily living (w/ supporting Rx slips):

I have ___ days of my Rx and I will need at least ___ more, depending upon when I can refill my Rx. (Try to maintain 30-60 supplies of meds. and copies of scripts and Rx's).

Service animal and other specialized aids and necessary services for me and my equipment:

Attachment D: Children & Young Person's Mental Health Service Information Passport

Version: 1.0

First published: October 2015

Prepared by: NHS England in collaboration with national participation partners GIFT for children and young people, and YoungMinds for parents and carers

Classification: OFFICIAL

The National Health Service Commissioning Board was established on 1 October 2012 as an executive non-departmental public body. Since 1 April 2013, the National Health Service Commissioning Board has used the name NHS England for operational purposes.

This template is in a Microsoft Word format so it can be edited when developing information passports for use. Once changes have been made, the passport should be attributed to the service and client, not NHS England overall.

The aim of this passport is to help **the service user** to own and communicate their story when moving between different services. The passport provides a summary of **the service user's** time with **the practitioner** in **ZZZ** service, for the information will be owned by **XXX**, and for it to be shared with any future services¹ if **the service user** wishes.² This passport must be created by **the service user** with the support of **the practitioner**. **The practitioner** should brief **the service user** on interim support available when issuing this passport. The practitioner and service user should ensure that any clinical information is also within the patient record, and that any extra details on personal preferences will be clearly shown.

¹ Practitioners receiving this passport should also seek appropriate access to the client's records from previous services.

² This passport template is for guidance only. Its layout and content are flexible to the preferences of those completing it.

Private and Confidential
Service User Name: **XXX**

D.O.B

Client NHS number:

Address:

Alternate Address (for example university address with term dates):

Date discharged from Service:

Name of therapist: **YYY**

Name of Service: **ZZZ**

Contact information:

Title	Guidance ³
About XXX	Statement about self which can include positive protective factors (hobbies etc.), wider life goals (e.g. beyond therapy)
Main statement	XXX & YYY to write a statement together of what they perceive to be the main issues they have worked on/would like to work on with services/in a therapeutic setting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What has been achieved?• What XXX would still like to work on now or in the future?
History	Key events Diagnosis/issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What has XXX been diagnosed with?• Is this agreed with XXX?• When was this diagnosis made (date/age)? Presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Symptoms /difficulties• Other influencing factors (e.g. home life)⁴• Strengths or mediating factors• Has there been any risk to self or others? Current medication

³ The suggestions in the table are not exhaustive, please add/amend where necessary and appropriate.

⁴ Practitioners should exercise their professional judgement on any information included regarding third parties

	<p>Other services XXX has had contact with whilst seeing YYY including other teams (e.g. Youth Offending Teams), or residential placements (e.g. inpatient or detention)</p> <p>Reason for discharge</p>
<p>Clinical Involvement History</p>	<p>What therapeutic intervention(s) have YYY used with XXX?</p> <p>Did XXX find this/these helpful or unhelpful?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If helpful – why? Name specific elements • If unhelpful – why? Name specific elements <p>What therapy have they received previously? Was this successful/unsuccessful and why(<i>as above</i>)?</p> <p>What does YYY suggest is most helpful therapeutic intervention when working with XXX?</p>
<p>Specific Needs</p>	<p>Appointments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferred appointment times (after school/college) • Preferred venues (in/out of clinics) <p>Management of risk</p> <p>Practitioner preferences(female only)</p> <p>Engagement barriers (DNAs; trust issues)</p>

Attachment E: Personal Emergency Medical Passport

PERSONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL PASSPORT **DATE**_____

Name:
Address:
Phones:
Email:

Support/contact (parent/relative) person

Name:
Address:
Phones:
Email:

Alternate contact person – not local

Name:
Address:
Phones:
Email:

Diagnoses I live with:

Immediate care issues (including service animal needs)

Medical issues

Specialized care issues and requirements

Primary Medical Insurance Carrier

Policy#: