Kingsbridge Heights Rehabilitation & Care Center
“The Jewel of the Bronx”

SURGE CAPACITY CASE STUDY

Super Storm Sandy 2012

Seemed Like a Hurricane to us!

Rhode Island LTC Mutual Aid Plan
Annual Education Conference
May 7, 2015
Bruce Zarett, MA, LNHA
Administrator

Objectives

1. Facility Overview and Storm History

2. Planning & Implementation

3. Lessons to remember
Facility

- Located in “The Bronx”
- Approximately 6 Miles North of Yankee Stadium

Facility

- 400 Skilled Nursing Beds
  - 2 Buildings
    (East & West Sides)
    200 beds each
  - Connected on 1st Floor
  - Census - 98 % Occupancy
Facility History

► Six Month Labor Strike from February – August 2008

► Change in Management in February 2009 - Receivership

Facility underwent tremendous changes and re-growth over the previous 4 years. Working together with the labor union, 1199 SEIU, great strides were made in instilling values in all the staff that to succeed, especially in the current economic environment, we must work together for the benefit of all, especially the residents whose lives are entrusted to us on a daily basis.

If not for this spirit of cooperation by the team, taking in 53 total evacuees would not have gone as smoothly as it did.
2011 Tropical Storm Irene
Hit NY Area on August 29

Events & Issues
► Officials Ordered Nursing Homes & Adult Homes to Evacuate in Anticipation
► Minor Damage from Storm
► Millions of $ in Costs—Health Care, Transportation, Housing & Effect on Residents, No Clear Explanation as to Payments
► Payments Not Made Until Around the Time of Sandy

2012 – Super Storm Sandy

Issues & Events
► Officials Were Concerned They Would Come Under Criticism if They Ordered Another Unnecessary Evacuation
► NYC and NYS Health Commissioners Believed Storm Would be no Worse Than Irene
► Initial Decision Not to Evacuate Made on Friday, October 26 – Three Days Before Landfall
2012 – Super Storm Sandy

Issues & Events – cont’d

▶ Full and Well-Organized Evacuation Would Have Taken at Least Two Days

▶ On the Advice of Aides and Governor Cuomo, Mayor Bloomberg Announced at October 26 News Conference “At this point we are not – let me repeat that, NOT – recommending evacuations of these facilities”

2012 – Super Storm Sandy

Issues & Events – cont’d

▶ Facilities Canceled Plans to Evacuate

▶ Monday, October 29, Shortly After Landfall at 8 pm, the Surge and High Tide Raised the Water Level More Than 12 feet in Brooklyn and the Rockaways, Queens

▶ At Least 29 Facilities in Queens and Brooklyn were Severely Flooded

▶ Many Generators Could Not Withstand Flooding
2012 – Super Storm Sandy

Issues & Events – cont’d

Shifting Blame –

State and City Health Officials Maintained That While They Didn’t Order an Evacuation, Facilities Could Have Voluntarily Moved Residents

NYC Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley said, “Most of them took ‘we’re not mandating you’ as an instruction not to, but that was their choice”
Pre Storm Planning

Began Before the Weekend

- Met with Departments to Review Emergency Procedures
- Discussed Staffing Levels
- Discussed Orders and Supply Levels
- Discussed Food Orders and Inventory, including Disaster Supplies
- Discussed Arrangements for Staff to Stay Over

The Storm

- Began on Sunday, October 28
- Department Heads contacted to report to Facility
- Major part of storm hit on Monday, October 29
- No power interruptions occurred at KH
- All public transportation was stopped
- Non Essential vehicles instructed to stay off the roads
Receiving Evacuees

Wednesday, October 31

- Spoke to representatives at OEM (Office of Emergency Management) throughout morning regarding accepting evacuees from Resort Nursing Home in Far Rockaway.
- Were prepared to accept 10 evacuees to be put into available beds.
- At 4 pm, 10 residents were brought to facility.
Distance Between Facilities - 28 miles

KHRCC - Located in the “NoZone”
Receiving Evacuees

Thursday, November 1

- Spoke to representative from Shoreview Rehabilitation & Health Care Center in Brooklyn and representatives at OEM throughout morning and into afternoon regarding accepting evacuees from Shore View.
- Originally prepared to accept 20 evacuees in 2nd floor East Recreation Room.
- Room was readied with couches and mattresses on the floor.

Original Preparation of Recreation Room

Mattresses on floor, Couches, Milk Crates for Personal Belongings
Receiving Evacuees

Thursday

- At approximately 4 pm, OEM confirmed that 20 residents would be coming to facility and asked if we needed any assistance.
- Asked for assistance to get beds/cots.
- At 5 pm were given contact info to obtain medical cots, contacted company and arranged for delivery.
Team Meeting

- Discussed number of evacuees expected.
- Review of each department’s role.
- Report by each department as to preparations made and needs.
- Ensured area set up for staff to sleep over.
- Evaluated resources and determined our position to assist further.
- Determined that we could do more.

Receiving Evacuees

Thursday

- Within the next half hour re-contacted vendor to determine if additional cots were available and increased to 40.
- Notified OEM that we were prepared to accept additional evacuees.
Residents began arriving at 8 pm.

Last resident admitted at 1am.

First Evacuee Admitted
Unpacking and Setting Up Medical Cots, Removing Couches and Mattress for 43 evacuees at same time evacuees were being admitted
Preparation

**Nursing Administration**
Met to establish plans for accepting and caring for evacuees which included scheduling staffing and……

Area established as nursing station for identifying, triaging, assessing and admitting evacuees
Bed numbers and wrist bands assigned as evacuees were greeted to ensure proper identification.
Nursing staff ensured a chart was prepared for each evacuee admitted

Set up Area for supplies
Set up Area for linens

Set up Temporary Medication Cart
Set up Supply Cart

Inventory Belongings
Receive Medications & Account for Narcotics

Dietary staff provided a hot meal after each evacuee was settled in.
Medical Director was on site to Assess Evacuees and Write Initial Orders

Attending physician came in to assist with assessments and writing initial orders
Settled in for the night
4 am –
Nursing Staff completed intake paperwork

Many staff members requested to be assigned to the Shore View unit
Regular Beds Later Replaced the Medical Cots on the Shoreview Unit

Facility Communication Efforts

- Updates Posted on facility Website Throughout Storm and Days Following
- Facility Staff Contacted Evacuee Families to Reassure them and to Provide Facility Contact Information
Facility Facts

- Facility had 2nd Most Number of Resident Days – Approximately 4,400
- It Took Over 1 year to get Full Payment from the State Medicaid Program

I think we may need to update our disaster recovery plan. This one suggests we all run around in circles shouting ‘What do we do??!!’ ‘What do we do??!!’
Lessons to remember:

1. Administration can’t do it alone. You must train and empower all staff to be able to step up to the plate when needed.
“A Team Effort is Alot of People Doing What I Say”

TEAM
Teach Everyone About Managing

Management Training
► How Do People Become Managers?
► Are all People Capable of Being Managers?
► Who Attends Seminars?

Resources
► Professional Associations
► State Associations
► Labor Unions
2. Create an environment whereby staff take ownership/ responsibility for what needs to be accomplished.

Empowerment

- Household Managers
- Facility Committees
- Share in Planning and Decision Making
3. Acknowledge efforts of the entire team. Make them feel appreciated for what was accomplished.

“Appreciating your Staff Increases the Chance They will be There for You When You Need them”
Contact Information

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