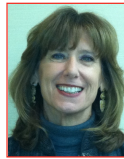


Are We Prepared to Protect Our Seniors in a Crisis?

Empowering Older Adults to Plan Ahead for Power Outages, Natural Disasters and Other Emergencies



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Preparing for a disaster means planning ahead and communicating and coordinating resources



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Why is disaster preparedness important?



Natural disasters

Floods, blizzards, hurricanes and other severe weather conditions



Man-made problems

power and equipment failures, fire, disease outbreaks, bio-terrorism



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Denial Is the Biggest Obstacle

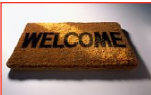
- It won't happen here
- I was safe last time
- I can manage without lights
- I can manage without heat or A/C
- I can't take my pet
- I can't leave my stuff
- I don't understand what the fuss is
- I'm not going



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When to Stay Home & When to Evacuate?



Staying Home

- Not in evacuation zone
- Home is structurally safe
- Person has ability to cope with loss of power &/or generator
- Person can manage alone or will have a caregiver with them



Evacuation is a Must

- In evacuation zone
- Home is not structurally safe
- Person cannot cope without vital services
- Person will not have help in the event of isolation for a period of time
- Person is frail and physically/cognitively compromised



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Specific Concerns for Elders at Home

- Often live alone
- Difficult to locate and track
- Limited suitable shelters and difficulty accessing them
- Limited geriatric expertise among health care workers
- Multiple chronic diseases that can be exacerbated by lack of food, water and medications; stress and exposure to infection
 - Populations of particular concern are those with history of depression, dementia, heart disease, stroke, breathing disorders and diabetes; those taking blood thinners, cancer chemotherapies and other essential medications



More than 70 percent of those who died during Katrina Hurricanes were older adults, many of whom refused or were unable to evacuate.



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Functional Limitations Make Coping with a Disaster Challenging

Mobility
CHF, COPD
Parkinson's
Arthritis, etc



- Standing in line
- Climbing stairs if elevators don't work
- Sleeping in low cot



Hearing and Seeing Limitations

- Understanding information or following directions
- Navigating unfamiliar terrain

Continence

- Shared and limited facilities
- Limited help with hygiene



Compromised immune Heat/Cold Vulnerability

- Stress, Fear, Discomfort
- Exposure to stress, infections, contamination
- Service interruptions

Cognitive Impairment Anxiety

- Exacerbations of behavioral issues related to stress
- Noise; unfamiliar, chaotic environment



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How Well Are We Prepared?

Somewhat Prepared

- Government and community agencies have coordinated disaster relief programs
- Emergency management teams are in place: Police fire, rescue and volunteer squads, HAZMAT team, hospitals, EMS

Less Organized and Prepared

- Physicians offices
- Ambulatory clinics
- Assisted living and nursing home facilities
- Patients at home

"I saw on the news that my mom's neighborhood could be evacuated. Should I bring her to the ER?"



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Need to Work with Formal and Informal Systems



- Family can be helpful in making arrangements & getting elder to move to safer locale
- Need to prepare for the limitations of facilities and find more appropriate places – ALFs, SNFs, Hotels
- Need to plan for creating a quieter environment if in a shelter
- Plan for overcoming heat or cold & other discomforts



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Planning Ahead: Reconnect with local authorities, shelters, alternate facilities to maintain relationships



- **At the start of each “season”**
Learn about changes in local resources, services and communication techniques.
- **Get connected as a “first responder”**
Facilitate getting around to clients immediately after the danger has passed.
–Health workers can be designated first responders
- **Work with local governments**
Identify “vulnerability registries” & shelters for special needs populations
- **Sign people up**
Ahead of time for special needs shelters



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Who Should Be Involved



- Geriatric Care Managers and other healthcare professionals with expertise in geriatrics
- Family, neighbors and friends
- Community based and local city and government agencies related to the aged
- Spiritual and religious organizations
- Pharmacists
- Gas, Electric and other utility companies
- Transport companies
- Senior centers, nursing homes and hospitals



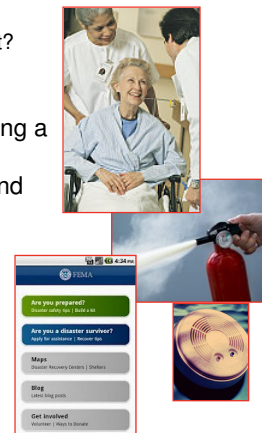
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Health Professional Responsibilities



- Identify vulnerable elders in practice
- Define an emergency and understand what emergency plans are in place
 - When should you evacuate? How will that be carried out?
 - How can a complex patient be moved?
 - Are sufficient supplies and generators available?
- Assist patients and caregivers in preparing and updating a Portable Medical Record
- Maintain up-to-date contact information for relatives and significant others and confirm who will notify family members during and after a crisis
- Become familiar with advanced telecommunications capability
 - FEMA Phone Application
 - Rerouting phone calls
 - New York City Disaster Plan
 - Facebook groups



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The Essentials of the Geriatric Go Bag



- Waist or fanny bag with Velcro straps
- 10 or more day supply of labeled medications
- Medical Summary: baseline functional and mental status, current illnesses and significant past illnesses
- Portable Medical Record
 - Water-safe folio
 - Medication list with dosages
 - List of medication, food and other allergies
 - Advance directives
- Contact information for family, physician and pharmacy
- Copy of Health insurance cards
- Copy of property, personal articles and life insurance policies
- Assistive devices – hearing aides and batteries, glasses, dentures, warm socks, face mask, oxygen tank



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Evacuation Emergency Kit



- **Sustenance**
Water (1 gallon/person/day), ready to eat nonperishable food for 7-10 days, can opener and eating utensils
- **Communications**
Radio with batteries, cell phones and chargers, 2way radio, flashlights, whistle
- **Personal Care**
First aide kit, personal hygiene items, warm clothes, wipes,
- **Personal Shelter**
Sleeping bags, pillow, blankets, plastic bags, fire extinguisher, lighter, lantern
- **Personal documents**
Family, financial and insurance documents, picture identification



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Resources for Healthcare Professionals, Patients and Caregivers



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Training and Education for public health professionals:

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/training/>

CDC's Emergency Preparedness and You:

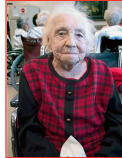
<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/preparedness/>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): Ready to Prepare.Plan.Stay Informed:

<http://www.GetAGamePlan.org>

American Public Health Association—Set Your Clocks, Check Your Stocks—home emergency kit:

<http://www.getreadyforflu.org/clocksstocks/index.htm>



American Red Cross – Be Red Cross Ready: Flash video and link to related resources:

<http://72.3.171.147/#SITE>

American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) Prepare Now:

<http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/clinical/disasterprep/prepare.html>

American Medical Association (AMA) Center for Public Health Preparedness and Disaster Response:

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/public-health/center-public-health-preparedness-disaster-response.shtml>



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Are you prepared?



- Know which professional, friends and family can help
- Have emergency contact information and make sure they have access to the elder's home
- Review and update plans annually
- Have prepared Go Bags and Emergency Kits
- Periodically review and update plans and all kits and supplies
- Keep a list of local resources and phone numbers



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Thank you!

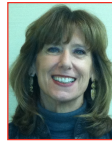


“By failing to prepare,
you are preparing to fail.”

- Benjamin Franklin



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Email questions and comments to webinars@SeniorBridge.com



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