

## THE TIME TO GET YOUR BSN IS NOW

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*In 2010 the Institute of Medicine (IOM) issued a landmark report and evidence based recommendations on the important role nursing will play in our nation's health care transformation. To meet the growing health care demands and challenges to serve patients better, we need to change how nurses are educated, trained and practice.*

*The report identifies the nursing profession-whose more than 3 million members make it the largest health care profession- as central in efforts to remake the U.S health care system. To achieve this the IOM made eight recommendations one of which is to increase the proportion of nurses with a baccalaureate degree to 80% by 2020. Right now, approximately 55% of Massachusetts' nursing workforce holds a BSN degree or higher. We are in a good starting place compared to other areas in the US but we have a lot of work to do. Recognizing that the 80% target would be much too difficult to achieve by 2020, the Massachusetts Action Coalition's goal is to increase the proportion of Massachusetts nurses with baccalaureate degrees or higher from 55% to 66% by 2020. The report*

*called on the nation's leaders to act on these recommendations.*

*In response, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and AARP established Action Coalitions in all 50 states that will advance the IOM's recommendations. Massachusetts was one of nine states to receive an APIN (Academic Progression in Nursing) grant to identify best practices for academic progression of nurses. The work focuses on:*

- building capacity in RN to BS/N programs*
- identifying educational pathways for nurses initially prepared at the ADN level and*
- Simplifying the transfer of credits into BSN programs through a Nursing Education Transfer Compact.*

*The goal is to ensure that our education system promotes and supports seamless academic progression for all nurses. The IOM's recommendations align with a growing body of research that supports the value of baccalaureate nursing education for patients and employers. A significant contribution to this body of evidence include the work of Linda Aiken, PhD, RN, FAAN, and colleagues, who in 2003 reported a significant decrease in surgical patient mortality in hospitals employing more staff nurses prepared at a baccalaureate level.*

*In 2013, Aiken and colleagues reported that within a hospital, a ten percent increase in the number of nurses with baccalaureate preparation translated into a reduction of 2.12 deaths per 1000 patients. Consequently, nurse leaders are recognizing the value of having a*

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**\* Our mission is to be dedicated to establish teams of local medical and public health professionals and lay volunteers to contribute their skills and expertise throughout the year as well as during times of community need.**



## BSN...

higher ratio of baccalaureate prepared nurses at the bedside, and incorporating that into their hiring practices and strategic planning. This was validated in Massachusetts through a recent employer survey conducted by MAAC. Nurses must be prepared to meet diverse patient needs, function as leaders, and deliver safe, high-quality patient care. This becomes even more critical as people are living longer in vulnerable states of health and are cared for with new approaches in a variety of settings.

For more information on the Massachusetts Action Coalition or the work being done to advance the objectives in the Future of Nursing Report, please visit the following sites:

-Center to Champion Nursing in America: [http:// campaignforaction.org](http://campaignforaction.org)

-Massachusetts Department of Higher Education: <http://www.mass.edu/nursing>

-Organization of Nurse Leaders: [www.OONL.org](http://www.OONL.org)

### Going Back to School: Getting Started

Making the decision to return to school is the biggest investment you can make in yourself and your future. Take that step ! Then:

Choose a program from the more than 20 colleges and universities in Massachusetts that offer BSN programs. They have a range of online or classroom courses, so you can find one designed to fit into your busy schedule. For a list of options, including RN-to-BSN, AD -to-BSN and LPN-to-BSN programs, visit the Massachusetts Association of Colleges of Nursing at <http://massnursing.org/baccalaureate.asp>

Explore financing options through schools, government loans, or scholarships through professional or-

ganizations. Earning a BSN is an investment in yourself and your future. Many hospitals and health care organizations provide tuition reimbursement as part of their employee benefits package. Ask if your employer provides tuition reimbursement. Visit the MA Student Nurses Association: <http://www.mastudentnurses.com/scholarships-andawards.html>

Build a support network with colleagues who are also interested in advancing their education. Share your decision with family and friends. They will want to offer support along the way.

### Questions to Consider When Choosing a BSN Program:

- How many courses will I need to earn my BSN?
- How much academic credit can I transfer from previous course-work or degree?
- What is the minimum grade and time limit for transfers?
- Will my manager provide support and flexibility?
- Does the school provide access to financial counseling and resources?
- Does my employer offer tuition reimbursement?

If you need answers related to your organizations' BSN hiring plans, tuition reimbursement , BSN requirements for employed RNs, or other related questions, please speak with your immediate supervisor or the Human Re-



# MRC BACK TO BASICS

## About the Medical Reserve Corps

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is a national network of volunteers, organized locally to improve the health and safety of their communities. The MRC network comprises 998 community-based units and over 200,000 volunteers located throughout the United States and its territories.

MRC volunteers include medical and public health professionals, as well as other community members without healthcare backgrounds. MRC units engage these volunteers to strengthen public health, improve emergency response capabilities and build community resiliency. They prepare for and respond to natural disasters, such as wildfires, hurricanes, tornados, blizzards, and floods, as well as other emergencies affecting public health, such as disease outbreaks. They frequently contribute to community health activities that promote healthy habits. Examples of activities that MRC volunteers participate in and support include:



- Emergency Preparedness and Response Trainings
- Emergency Sheltering
- Vaccination Clinics
- Outreach to Underserved Community Members
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Medical Facility Surge Capacity
- First Aid During Large Public Gatherings
- Planning, Logistical, & Administrative Support
- Veterinary Support and Pet Preparedness
- Engaging Youth in Public Health Activities
- Health Screenings
- Responder Rehab
- Disaster Medical Support
- Tobacco Cessation
- Community Event Support
- Healthy Living
- Health Education and Promotion



## MRC BACK TO BASICS

Local health, safety and preparedness begins with you



Why Should I Volunteer?

You've worked hard in your career to master a variety of skills – in medicine, public health, safety, logistics, communications or a number of other areas. Volunteering with the Medical Reserve Corps is a simple and effective way to use and improve those skills, while helping to keep your family, friends and neighbors safe and healthy. For example, you may put those skills to use during an emergency, or while providing some services for the most vulnerable members of your community.

Volunteering can give the great satisfaction of helping others. For many individuals, volunteering gives them a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives. It helps to broaden their social networks, and that can have many positive effects. Volunteering provides opportunities for social interactions with fellow volunteers while supporting an important activity in the community. Interacting with others with a common interest is also a great way to create new relationships.

Volunteering can also have a significant effect on your own health. Research presented by the Corporation for National and Community Service shows a strong relationship between volunteering and health: those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression later in life than those who do not volunteer. See *The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research* for more information (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/volunteering/benefits.asp>).

What Would I Do As A Volunteer?

MRC volunteers train - individually and with other members of the unit - in order to improve their skills, knowledge and abilities. Sometimes the training is coursework, and other times it is part of a drill or exercise conducted with partner organizations in the community. Continuing education units and credits are even available for some programs. Many MRC volunteers assist with activities to improve public health in their community – increasing health literacy, supporting prevention efforts and eliminating health disparities.

In an emergency, local resources get called upon first, sometimes with little or no warning. As a member of an MRC unit, you can be part of an organized and trained team. You will be ready and able to bolster local emergency planning and response capabilities.

The specific role that you will play, and the activities in which you will participate, will depend upon your background, interests and skills, as well as the needs of the MRC unit and the community.

Who Do I Volunteer With?

Many MRC members are just like you – nurses, doctors, pharmacists, therapists, public health officials and other community members who believe in keeping your local area healthy, prepared and resilient. They share your commitment to helping others and making a difference.

You may also work closely with staff members from the local health department, emergency management agency, hospital or other organizations that partner with the MRC. In fact, the services that you provide may help these other organizations to meet their mission.

## MRC HAPPENINGS



### *Seattle & King County Mega Clinic Treats 4,000*

The Seattle & King County Public Health Reserve Corps (PHRC) has a robust group of volunteers. This year alone, they have dedicated more than 7,300 hours of their time working with at-risk populations in the community. The Director of the Seattle Center, recognizing a need in the community, brought together representatives from across the area's healthcare industry, which included PHRC Coordinator Dave Nichols. These representatives worked with their respective organizations to put together a multi-day clinic to provide medical and dental care to the region's underinsured and uninsured populations. The Seattle/King County Clinic would not have been possible without the community partnerships. More than 3,800 health professionals, volunteers, interpreters and compassion K-9s across many organizations volunteered their time during the two-day clinic, where uninsured and underinsured patients were able to receive dental, eye, and medical care. The massive arena, usually home to sporting events and live performances, was completely unrecognizable after volunteers set up 117 dental chairs, 14 lanes of equipment for eye exams, and countless seating for more than 4,000 patients. Even the suites were transformed into 58 private medical treatment rooms. The PHRC volunteers were involved from the beginning of the event. Volunteers could be seen helping out all over the arena. They ranged from doctors and nurses to interpreters and general support volunteers. Their work helped to serve 4,010 patients over the two day period. The Seattle & King County PHRC also has an active ham radio group that pro-

vided the communications support during the event. The PHRC has around 50 radios in their arsenal that were used to connect different sides of the arenas. Aside from being an incredible event that helped provide care for patients from more than 200 unique zip codes, the event gave the PHRC practice in running a full-scale medical clinic. If an emergency event arose, the volunteers are now even more prepared to successfully manage a similar shelter.

### *Scott County, Indiana-*

Last spring, Indiana MRC units were activated to respond to a major spike in HIV outbreak cases in Scott County. The increase in new HIV infections led to it being determined a public health emergency by local and state officials. The Scott County MRC leader was involved with the deployment from the state serving as the liaison between the local and state departments of health. The Ripley County MRC leader also provided support by coordinating MRC volunteers deployed during the public health response and by getting out key messaging, which was key as the MRC proved instrumental in providing messages to individuals about services being offered and information regarding all response efforts. MRC volunteers were recruited as nursing staff to assist with immunizations and as vital records personnel to assist with accessing birth certificates. The Scott County MRC also conducted a needle exchange program to reduce the transmission of HIV and Hepatitis C in the community, which became law during the outbreak. Along with the Ripley County MRC and Scott County MRC, the Floyd County and Clark County MRC units also activated to staff Community Outreach Centers in support of vaccinations, public health education, and HIV testing.



## COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

### *Active Shooter Training and Resources*

NACCHO remains committed to providing resources for organizations to help in their response to this ongoing public health challenge. To support its member public health departments, NACCHO provides resources, training, and guidance related to Suspicious Activity Training, Active Shooter and Explosive Device, Psychological First Aid, and Risk Communications.

\*\*We can consider a Day of Training if there is sufficient interest. It would need to be a Saturday program—a lot of parts to this.

### *Cyber Safety*

Mark January 28, 2016 on your calendar as Data Privacy Day. DPD is an international effort held annually and organized by the **National Cyber Security Alliance** to create awareness about the importance of privacy and protecting personal information.

DPD is part of a greater effort, the **#PrivacyAwarecampaign**, which helps everyone understand how they can own their online presence and reminds businesses that privacy is indeed good for business. NCSA's #PrivacyAware campaign provides free, nonproprietary resources to help you spread the word about privacy and protecting personal information. Here are some of the things you can do:

- At Work ... Privacy is good for business: Create a culture of privacy at work by teaching all employees what privacy means to your organization and the role they have in making sure privacy is achieved and maintained. Learn more about online business safety
- At Home ... Own your online presence: Help you and your family be #PrivacyAware. Talk to your family and friends about protecting personal information and how to stay safe online. Get started with these tips.
- In Your Community ... Share your privacy knowledge: Volunteer in a local school, senior care facility or faith-based

organization, send messages on community listservs and use resources from the #PrivacyAware campaign to spread the word. Find some privacy tips for businesses, older adults, teens and parents

One way you can join the 2016 effort is by becoming a Data Privacy Day Champion. DPD Champions include companies and organizations of all sizes, nonprofits, government organizations, schools and school districts, colleges and universities and individuals. Find some tools to promote Data Privacy Day and learn how to get involved and visit [www.staysafeonline.org/DPD](http://www.staysafeonline.org/DPD) for more information.

### *For School Teachers and School Nurses:*

Rick Tobin has a series of helpful school safety guides providing easily implemented tips for classroom teachers to improve the safety environment in their school and to increase their skills for emergencies. The intent is to build the skills in students from year-to-year from K-6, middle school and high school. Each one of these three guides specifically addresses the unique environments and challenges of all three developmental groups, and the needs of teachers in those settings.

Tobin explains he wanted to address the question so many teachers have asked him over the years, "How do I meet the requirements to keep my students safe and still make the topic relevant and interesting for students, parents and for me, as a facilitator of safety?" The guides were developed and vetted over a three-year period to ensure they truly met the real needs of today's instructors and made sense to superintendents and principals. Learn how to order guides for your schools and visit [www.safetolearn.com](http://www.safetolearn.com) for more resources.



## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



### **Core Disaster Life Support (eCDLS) Available Online through MRC TRAIN**

MRC TRAIN ([www.mrc.train.org](http://www.mrc.train.org)), part of the larger TRAIN learning network, is constantly working with organizations to connect their content and resources to the platform. By having training listed on MRC TRAIN, not only is it more accessible in a single location for MRC volunteers, but it also allows training transcripts to accurately reflect complete training records, with courses offered locally, regionally, and nationally existing side by side. MRC is pleased to announce the availability of the online version of Core Disaster Life Support (eCDLS) from the National Disaster Life Support Foundation (NDLSF) on MRC TRAIN. By working together, the NDLSF and the MRC Program are able to offer this course to MRC volunteers at no cost (normally the course is \$15.00). Register today at <http://bit.ly/eCDLS>. Stay tuned for future offerings to be made available!

Each month there is a presentation from the national office and the following presentation was for January. It speaks of a Nursing Committee, perhaps we should take 2016 to develop subgroups or formalize the two we have which are Animal Care and Interpreters.

In 2009, FEMA issued guidelines for Disaster Shelters mandating the integration of "functional needs individuals" into the general population. Recognizing that most volunteers lacked the knowledge and skills to care these individuals, particularly in a disaster situation, our Nursing Subcommittee adopted the concept of utilizing short "Just-in-Time" training videos to assist non-medical volunteers in caring for functional needs individuals. We received the support

of the Kansas City Chapter of the American Red Cross and the committee decided on an initial list of 15 themes for the videos.

Research was conducted and procedures were written utilizing best practices to validate the subject matter.

<http://www.mrckc.org/shelter-videos.html>

### **Institute for Wellness Education Provides Scholarship Opportunity for Unit Leaders**

The Institute for Wellness Education (IWE) is offering special scholarships and discounts to MRC units for their introductory course, Take Charge of Your Life: Be well to Do Well. The course's strategies are part of the US National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices and the focus of IWE's wellness coach training. IWE's mission is to make health and wellness the norm in communities across the nation by training community-based professionals with science-based strategies so they can help people live longer, healthier, and happier lives. With this competency-based course, you will walk away with the skills and confidence to put powerful strategies into immediate use. Plus, this certification is a way to expand your current professional services or a great first step if you're looking for a new career as a wellness coach. The 36- to 50-hour course is online and self-paced; and it features a hands-on, learn-by-doing format. Take Charge of Your Life: Be Well to Do Well is approved for up to 50 hours of continuing education credits for nurses, psychologists, social workers, and counselors; NASM approved for 1.9 CEUs. Students may also earn 3 college credits in nutrition. Learn more and apply now:

<https://www.instituteforwellness.com/mrcscholarships/>.

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*Never doubt that a small group of  
thoughtful, committed citizens can  
change the world. Indeed, it's the  
only thing that ever has.*  
Margaret Mead



«First Name» «Last Name»

«Home Address»

«City» «State» «Zip»

## Local Events:

Wednesday, January 27, 2016, 6:30 pm

Free event: Viewing of "IF ONLY," introduced by Producer, Jim Wahlberg.

After viewing film discussion on how prescription and opiate abuse affects our community.

To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/if-only-movie-premiere-tickets-20300731033>

January 19

Health Disparities Collaborative Committee Meeting 2:00 p.m.

Heywood Hospital's Board Room Green Street, Gardner

The North Central Mass Minority Coalition Health Disparities Collaborative Committee will hear a presentation on Asthma Prevention presented by Robert Quist, BSRRT, Asthma Educator and Respiratory Therapist, Heywood Hospital

February 9

Understanding the Strengths and Needs of Runaway and Homeless Youth

11:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. Clinton Hospital 201 Highland Street, Clinton

The North County Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Network of LUK, Inc. exists to educate the community about resources available for the runaway and homeless youth population. Through our community education efforts, we hope to decrease barriers for young people to access services, improve initial emergent needs assessments, increase the effectiveness and timeliness of service linkage and referral and serve as a catalyst for better coordination of existing services.

Participants in this training will develop an enhanced knowledge of the Runaway and Homeless Youth population, learn the steps to more efficiently intervene with a young person experiencing a housing crisis, and learn to identify existing community resources that can assist young people in a housing crisis. Refreshments will be provided. **Please register by Feb. 2 with Tom Baker at RHY@LUK.org or 800-579-0000 ext. 2415.** This training is provided by a generous grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Mass.



Miscellaneous



Announcements

*Please check the website and your email for periodic updates. Have an idea or saw something that you would like to share, call or email. Would love to hear about it.*

*Think of the positive effect 400 volunteers could have with 400 ideas!!*

**SAVE THE DATE!**



February 27 Gardner Chamber of Commerce (above the Bank of America downtown) 6pm-9pm Training by CMDART for caring animals in disasters. **This does require pre-registration so please call 978-928-3834 and leave your name. See Web site for details [Www.wachusettmrc.org](http://Www.wachusettmrc.org)**

**And power point presentation from the IDCE conference on Decontamination of Animals. Excellent presentation that both of us missed due to its popularity and limited enrollment for the program.**

**In planning: March 20 at the King Phillips Restaurant, Phillipston**

**April 12, 2014 Wachusett Mountain, Mountain Rd, Princeton, MA  
Triage in a Disaster Scenario**

Program on triage during a disaster. The triage concepts and response is different during a disaster sometimes with tough-decisions. Program will also include hands on practice activities. CEUs are available. **No cost 9-2pm**

Public Health  
Focus



HEALTH INEQUITY-WHAT IS IT?

