



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN NURSING FACILITIES

The Medical Director's Role

Did you know?

Medical directors are required to engage in emergency response and preparedness planning.

Emergency Response and Preparedness Planning must include active participation from a facility's Medical Director.

The Medical Director's general responsibilities extends to the following emergency planning requirements:

- Providing continuity of care in an emergency, including providing care when contracted services, supplies, etc., cannot be fulfilled during the event.
- Assessing impact on residents when power is lost to the facility for patient care equipment and heating and cooling the facility for the safety of residents.
- Engaging and coordinating with community to meet public health emergencies.
- Reviewing the feasibility of the facility's plan as part of cooperation and collaboration w/ Emergency Preparedness officials, including types and duration of energy sources available in an emergency.
- Ensuring any environment where residents are provided care is a safe setting.

The Medical Director has an important role in resident safety.

According to federal and state rule the Medical Director is responsible for:

- Implementation of resident care policies.
- The coordination of medical care in the facility.

(26 TAC §554.1907 & 42 CFR §483.70)

(See more on next page)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN NURSING FACILITIES

The Medical Director's Role

Additional emergency planning requirements include:

- **Safely evacuating residents, considering their care and treatment needs**, including the need for facility staff to accompany a resident being evacuated because trained medical professionals are not provided by the transportation service.
- **Ensuring patient records are secure and readily available to support continuity of care** during an emergency.
- **Ensuring residents are safely transferred and tracked**, accounting for residents' specific needs and the ability of receiving facilities to continue care
- **Adopting policies and procedures for ensuring continuity of care in an Alternate Care Site** under an 1135 waiver.
- **Collaborating with their local emergency officials** in such proactive planning to allow an organized and systematic response to assure continuity of care even when services at their facilities have been severely disrupted.
- **Sharing information and medical documentation for residents** with other HC providers to maintain continuity of care.
- **Reporting the ability of the facility to provide assistance** to other facilities and the community.
- **Training facility staff**, including how the facility manages the continuity of care to residents during an emergency.

Emergency Planning Resources

- State Rules: 26 TAC [§554.1914](#)
- Federal Rules: 42 CFR [§483.73](#)
- [Appendix Z](#) of the State Operations Manual (SOM) for guidance on requirements in 42 CFR §483.73
- Check the HHSC website for emergency planning trainings: <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/providers/training/>

For more information email LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov or call 512-438-3161.