

December 2014



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# MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

## MADISON COUNTY MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS 2014

Our Madison County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Unit continues to grow in members; we currently have a total of 285 volunteers! The breakdown of our volunteers is as follows: seven dentists, six EMTs, six Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors, one Licensed Professional Counselor, four Licensed Clinical Social Workers, one LPN, one Pharmacist, thirty-seven RNs, three RN/CNPs, and 219 other volunteers with skills, training, and expertise to help with administrative and non-medical activities. We so appreciate all your efforts to help recruit additional volunteers who possess the dedication and commitment you have demonstrated.

We held two Orientation Training sessions this year – one in March and another in September. A total of forty-three volunteers attended these sessions. 77% of our Madison County MRC Volunteers have attended a training session. If you have not attended a session or would like to take a refresher class, please, plan on attending Orientation Training in 2015. **Save the Date for the March 23, 2015 training!**

Five MRC Volunteers participated in the Madison County EMA Earthquake Exercise in April, seventeen took the Heartsaver First Aid CPR AED or CPR AED classes in November, and MRC Volunteers continue to sign up for CERT classes when they become available. We will continue to forward additional training opportunities to you in 2015.

The MRC Volunteer Coordinator participated in the 2014 MRC Region V West quarterly conference calls, national MRC Network Well Check Webinars, and the MRCIL Quarterly Meeting

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## ACTIVITIES

Nineteen MRC Volunteers attended the MRC Orientation Training session held at the Madison County Health Department on September 23, 2014. Seventeen volunteers also completed the Heartsaver First Aid CPR AED or CPR AED courses on November 12 or 15, 2014.

Our MRC unit was represented at the Fly-In and Car Show on September 27, 2014. In November, Cathy Paone, MRC Volunteer Coordinator, participated in the Edwardsville High School (EHS) Health Fair and made Family Preparedness and Medical Reserve Corps presentations to two EHS Health Occupations classes and at an SIUE School of Nursing seminar. Additional preparedness and MRC materials were prepared for the Edwardsville Fire Department Open House and the Madison County Teachers Institute Social Services Personnel.

Cathy Paone participated in the September, October, and December 2014 MRC Region V West quarterly conference calls, the September 2014 MRCIL Quarterly Meeting Conference Call, and monthly national MRC Well Check Webinars. All of these activities provide an opportunity to receive program updates, grant related information, and any other pertinent national and/or regional information that may impact or benefit our local MRC unit.

In December, we welcomed Intern, Michele Milton. Michele is currently working on her Master of Public Health in bio-security/disaster preparedness at Saint Louis University. She will finish the program in Spring 2015. She is a member of our MRC unit and also volunteers with the American Red Cross Disaster Action Team. One of her hobbies is to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Association. After her grandmother passed away from the disease, Michele organized a team, Toni's Darlings, which has raised thousands of dollars to help support the Alzheimer's Association.

**EBOLA UPDATE FOR MRC VOLUNTEERS**

**Debra Tscheschlok, R.N., B.S.N.**

Ebola is a scary highly infectious disease but should we be scared it will infect our family or us? Well, have you visited or traveled through the affected areas of West Africa (Guinea, Liberia, Mali, or Sierra Leone) in the last 21 days? Have you had contact with a known Ebola case in the last 21 days? If the answer is no, then you have nothing to worry about. The disease needs direct contact with body fluids of an infected person to get it—it is not airborne. We do not have infected animals in this country so that is not a problem. In Africa, bush meat and bats can carry the virus which Africans may handle and get infected.

Public health in the U.S. is active in preventing Ebola from emerging in this country. West Africa is poor without the public health resources we have here, thus the rapid spread of disease there. In the U.S., screening of travelers, who may have been in the impacted African locations or passed through them, is being done at 5 major airports. If infected, they are isolated at a hospital for treatment. If not infected, they will have daily monitoring for any signs of the disease. Those without disease may be quarantined or have restricted travel movements placed on them depending on the risk factors assessed. If the contacts get sick, the cycle starts again, monitor their contacts, isolating that case from others. These types of interventions have been used in all kinds of infectious diseases; this method is tried and true and works well.

We have only had two health care workers acquire the disease in the U.S. via contact with a confirmed Ebola patient. Other Ebola cases were arrivals into the U.S. who had acquired the disease in West African infected countries. It is therefore most unlikely that we would ever call in MRC Volunteers to assist us with handling Ebola. It just does not have the big population impact

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***"The 2014 Ebola epidemic is the largest in history, affecting multiple countries in West Africa... CDC and partners are taking precautions to prevent the further spread of Ebola within the United States."***

**CDC.gov/ebola**

## EBOLA UPDATE (cont)

that something like pandemic influenza would have. Though very important, the interventions needed for contact tracing, etc. can be handled locally with our staff and partner agencies like we handle other infectious diseases.



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## MADISON COUNTY MRC 2014 (cont)

Conference Call. Public Health Emergency Response Staff attended STARRS Public Health and Gateway Volunteer Network Meetings, newly established Madison County Citizen Corps Council meetings, and preparedness conferences. We expanded community outreach efforts allowing us to provide family preparedness and MRC information to more Madison County residents.

2014 was a very busy year! Trainings and networking provided us with opportunities to build the strength and resiliency of our unit. We look forward to developing a more robust volunteer program in 2015.

Thank you, again, for your dedication and commitment. Happy, Healthy, and Safe Holidays!!!

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