



NIEHS Worker Education and Training Program

April 21-23, 2004
Washington, DC

**Training Partnerships for Prevention, Protection and Preparedness:
A Conference to Build Stronger Partnerships On Disaster Response Training**

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MEETING NOTES FROM BREAKOUT 2: HOSPITAL, WMD, AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE TRAINING

Thursday, April 22

Breakout 2: Hospital, WMD, and Emergency Response Training

Moderator: Mark Catlin

Moderated by Mark Catlin from SEIU Education and Support Fund, this breakout session focused on current training at hospitals and other first receiver/emergency response organizations. In particular, the breakout examined the characteristics of four successful NIEHS partnerships around hospital, WMD, and emergency response training.

Michael Vatch of Brookdale University Hospital and Steve Schrag of SEIU Local 1199NY, began the breakout by discussing the training partnership with the Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center. With approximately 100,000 visits a year, Brookdale has one of the busiest Emergency Departments in New York City's five boroughs. A recently remodeled emergency room facility now includes a decontamination area and is prepared to serve the wounded in case of a terrorist attack. Worker trainers at SEIU Education and Support Fund provide two levels of training. The first level, the 8-hour emergency response awareness training, is intended for employees from across hospital departments and uses the small group activity method. The second level, the 24-hour emergency response operations level training, with Paul Penn of EnMagine, is intended for emerging health threats, including WMD, for pre-hospital, emergency department, safety and security staff.

The second group of speakers highlighted the partnership between Lutheran Hospital (NY) and the Federation of Nurses/United Federation of Teachers (UFT). Renee Gestone-Setteducac and Jihad Hamad discussed how the Federation of Nurses/UFT collaborated with Lutheran Hospital on an 8-hour emergency preparedness/disaster response training for emergency room nurses to improve the hospital's emergency response capabilities.

Building on this successful collaboration, the next step involved providing more-in depth training to nurses, including those in the intensive care and recovery rooms. The International Chemical Workers Union (ICWU) in conjunction with the Federation of Nurses/UFT and the American Federation of Teachers conducted a four-day course "Protection of Hospital Personnel and Patients in Response to a Weapons of Mass Destruction Attack" at the UFT headquarters in March 2004. Having both the employer and the UFT collaborating together in this training was eye-opening and very well received. An immediate outcome of the March 2004 course is that ICWU will conduct a 4-day course at Lutheran Hospital for staff nurses and supervisors.

The third discussion, led by Dennis Decker and Tipawan Reed, focused on the partnership between the Commonwealth of Kentucky and OAI (of the Puerto Rican Forum), their respective organizations. Building upon the on-going relationship with the State Fire Marshal's office, OAI served as a catalyst in bringing together, for the first time, all key state agencies to develop and implement: (1) a statewide training plan for first responders; and (2) a needs assessment to determine WMD preparedness. Effective collaboration at the statewide level is more critical now than ever before and learning from this experience and replicating it elsewhere would be a worthwhile endeavor.

The final discussion, led by Scott Solomon and Tipawan Reed, offered information on the partnership between the Chicago Fire Department, IAFF and OAI. The attacks on 9-11 caused us all to realize that we must learn to work together and that first responders must be provided with as much knowledge, skills and tools as possible to ensure that the 9-11 experience will never repeat itself. This two-phase initiative between IAFF and OAI strives to do just that. The goal of the partnership, to provide hazmat technical level training to Chicago Fire Department personnel, consists of a five-day train-the-trainers course, attended by 28 selected Chicago fire fighters. These trainers will, in turn, conduct technician-level HAZWOPER training for 250-300 individuals during the current program year.

Mark Catlin concluded the session by dividing the participants into four separate groups and asked them to list what successes, obstacles, and unexpected benefits can arise from partnerships. From these lists, the breakout session as a whole defined what they felt were the four key factors for success – quality programs, adequate funding, mutual respect, and champions for the idea/partnership.