



Washoe County



H1N1 Flu Clinics: a 'shot in the arm' for "Community Immunity"

Issue 4
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It's 6:30 on a dark, chilly November morning. While most folks were still sipping their morning coffee, a troop of MRC volunteers issued wrist bands to the early comers at an H1N1 Flu Vaccination clinic this past fall.

Snowflakes danced across the parking lot while other MRC volunteers dispensed H1N1 flu vaccines at the clinic, or diligently checked each patient's paperwork. Others worked the hallways, maintaining a sense of order throughout the long lines of waiting patients.

"I read about this morning's clinic in the newspaper," said one local resident who braved the cold weather to get her children vaccinated. The free H1N1

vaccination clinics, sponsored by the Washoe County Health District, have provided 17,669 — more than half— of the 32,531 flu vaccinations reported to date in Washoe County since the mass immunization effort began.

"Our MRC volunteers have been essential to the success of these clinics," said Dr. Randall Todd, Director of Epidemiology and Public Health Preparedness for Washoe County.

The H1N1 mass vaccination clinics are the underpinnings of community or "herd" immunity.

"By decreasing the percentage of people who are susceptible to the flu through mass immunizations we can reduce contagion to at-risk populations." Dr. Todd added.



While the MRC continues robust recruitment efforts, the clinics are slowing down and deployment of volunteers has been lower than usual.

During this lull of activity MRC volunteers are encouraged to focus on basic training, such as CPR and First Aid, to boost their knowledge, skills and core competencies, regardless of their roles within the MRC unit.

Training info...

MRC volunteers provided more than 450 hours of service at the H1N1 clinics this fall.

...For more information on training opportunities see page 2, or contact Betsy Hambleton at bmellinger@washoecounty.us

Inside this issue:

A shot in the arm for community 1

Director's corner 1

MRC wins award for their H1N1 clinic efforts 2

Training:
First Aid & CPR 2
Orientation

Haitian Response Update 2

Director's corner

I'd like to introduce Betsy Hambleton, who became the Washoe County MRC Program Coordinator as of January, 2010. Betsy comes to us with experience in government, marketing, media relations, and hospital volunteer management. I'm sure you will all enjoy working with her and that the unit will benefit from her skill and expertise.

I'm still with the Health District, Epidemiology and Public Health Preparedness Division, but I now serve as the Healthcare Systems Liaison, after having been promoted in June, 2009. I will still be seeing you at trainings, exercises and serving in real events. Being the MRC Coordinator has been a tremendous learning experience for me, and I'm proud to have seen

the unit progress from its very beginnings to the 140 members we have today. It has been my pleasure to be a part of the Washoe County Medical Reserve Corps and to serve our community along with all of you.

Thank you,
Debra Barone

Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain love for one another.

Erma Bombeck

Orientation meetings



If you haven't been to an orientation meeting yet, please plan to attend one of the following sessions:

Wed., Feb. 17, 12:00 -1:00 pm (feel free to bring a lunch)

Thurs., Feb 18, 5:15 -6:15 pm

Fri., Feb 19, 10:00 -11:00 am

This will be a great opportunity for you to meet other MRC volunteers. You will also have your photo taken and ID badge printed. Please **RSVP** (to bmellinger@washoecounty.us, or call 328-6111) so we'll know how many people to expect at each session and can reserve the appropriate meeting space.

Meetings will be at the Health District, 1001 E. 9th Street, Bldg. B, Reno.

MRC unit is nominated for Silver Syringe Award

Every year the **Northern Nevada Immunization Coalition**, a diverse partnership of individuals, businesses and organizations committed to improving and protecting the health of our communities, presents the Silver Syringe Awards for outstanding performance in community immunization efforts.

The Washoe County Medical Reserve Corps will receive the "Connecting Our Community" award at this year's Silver Syringe annual award luncheon. This is a specific award given to organizations who do an outstanding job of supporting community immunization efforts. This year's award recognizes the MRC unit's outstanding participation in the H1N1 immunization clinics this past fall.

"The volunteers were instrumental in helping to mitigate the H1N1 pandemic in our area," said Judy Davis, MA, Public Information Officer for the Washoe County Health Division.

The MRC provided more than 450 volunteer hours assisting at the H1N1 mass vaccination clinics that operated at the County's Health Department from October to December.

With the help of our MRC volunteers we were able to provide vaccinations, free of charge, to thousands of

members of our community, many of whom would otherwise not have been able to obtain vaccinations.

This year's luncheon will be held on February 26, 2010, from noon to 1:30 PM at St. Mary's Auditorium, 235 W. 6th, Reno. Tickets are \$10, which includes lunch. For those MRC volunteers interested in attending, please complete the registration card below and mail it to the address that appears on the card.

Congratulations! Our thanks to all the MRC members who supported this year's H1N1 immunization clinics.

Silver Syringe Registration
February 26, 2010 • 12:00—1:30 PM • Saint Mary's Auditorium

\$10 per person (\$15 at door) \$80 for a reserved table of 8

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone/Email: _____

Please send check payment by 2/19/10 to:

Northern Nevada Immunization Coalition
520 W. Sixth St.
Reno NV 89503

Please call 775.770.6713 to pay by Visa/Mastercard



First Aid and CPR classes—FREE to MRC volunteers

Washoe County offers free emergency training classes to our MRC volunteers. Upcoming courses include First Aid and CPR. Class dates, times and locations are as follows:

February 24, 2010, 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM, Central Conference Room at the Washoe County Complex, Bldg C. (this particular class is full; if you're not already signed up please plan on attending a future class)

March 9, 2010, 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM, Central Conference Room at the Washoe County Complex, Bldg C.

April 8, 2010, 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM, Central Conference Room at the Washoe County Complex, Bldg C.

May 25, 2010, 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM, Central Conference Room at the Washoe County Complex, Bldg C.

June 22, 2010, 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM, Central Conference Room at the Washoe County Complex, Bldg C.

Please contact Betsy Hambleton, MRC Program Coordinator, at bmellinger@washoecounty.us.

Haitian Response Update

On January 26, the ESAR-VHP Coordinator for the Nevada State Health Division, Eileen Kessler, held a conference call with MRC Coordinators across the state and Commander Narayan Nair from the Office of the Surgeon General regarding efforts in Haiti.

The conference call provided MRC Coordinators with an update about the deployment of volunteers to Haiti in the wake of the devastating 7.0 earthquake on January 12th.



CDR Narayan indicated that the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the lead agency, had dispatched 270 individual DMAT (Disaster Medical Assistance) team members by the end of January, providing much-needed assistance.

In the long-term it appears that DMAT will be the lead agency, and will be supported by a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as the mission transitions from triage and trauma medicine to primary care medicine.

Currently, long-range plans are focused on rebuilding the infrastructure (roads, bridges, electrical grid, hospitals, clinics, water and sewer treatment systems), most of which were badly damaged during the earthquake and subsequent aftershocks.

While there is not sufficient infrastructure to support large numbers of volunteers at this time, we will continue working with the State Health Division to provide you with the latest updates and information as it pertains to the Washoe County MRC unit.