

MARO MONTHLY

with Northwell Health's Crisis Management Team

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HELLO!

Welcome to another month of Northwell Health Crisis Management Team's newsletter, where you can share, learn about, and explore emergency management topics! Each month we will highlight different topics in emergency preparedness and emergency management, as well as healthcare administration. We encourage you to review our upcoming course offerings and other relevant information!

As always, we look forward to sharing our resources, hearing your suggestions, and getting to know you at our trainings.

The April 2023 newsletter will be centered around *climate change and climate related resiliency efforts for healthcare entities*.

OUR MISSION

To lead the health system and community in an efficient and effective way before, during, and after emergency situations.

OUR VISION

Northwell's Crisis Management Incident Response Team is committed to providing the surrounding community with a high-quality learning environment, training resources, and promoting an environment of collaboration with our training partners.

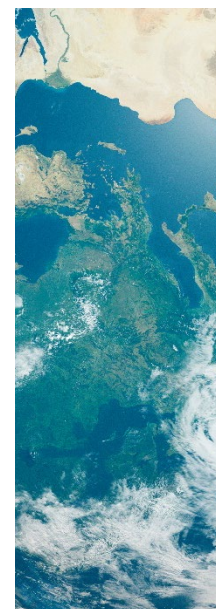


"Environmental health and human health are one in the same."

– University of Washington



Scan Here to Register for our courses!



Climate Change: *Why Should We Care?*

Climate change, a major public health issue, is no longer a distant threat- it is affecting our communities today. The impacts of climate change are felt across the globe from the food we drink to the quality of the air we breathe. According to the World Health Organization, climate change is the single biggest health threat facing humanity as the impacts are already harming health through air pollution, disease, extreme weather events, forced displacement, food insecurity and pressures on mental health. Every year, environmental factors take the lives of around 13 million people. Vulnerable populations like people of color, the poor, those with disabilities or chronic disease, and the elderly are most at risks of being negatively affected by climate change (Health Care Climate Council, 2020).

As the effects of climate change worsens, health care organizations will be tasked with managing populations impacted by climate related health threats, as well as maintaining resilient and sustainable infrastructure. Although, a daunting task, health care leaders can equip themselves with a better understanding of climate and its associated impacts, as well as strategies and solutions to address climate change to build climate-resilient health systems.

Adaptation vs. Mitigation: Understanding Strategies to Address Climate Change

It is important to note that climate differs from weather, as weather is categorized by environmental conditions on a day-to-day basis, whereas climate represents environmental conditions over a prolonged period (NASA, 2021). More specifically, climate change refers to a *shift* in temperature and weather patterns over an extended period. Climate change results from greenhouse gas emission (GHGs), such as carbon dioxide and methane, being released in the atmosphere that traps heat causing rising global temperatures. In addition to rising temperatures, climate change has the potential to cause droughts, wildfires, rising sea levels, mass flooding events, detrimental storms, and declining biodiversity (United Nations, 2023).

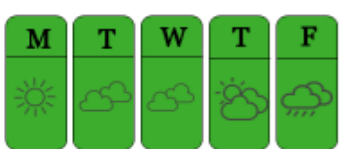
According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, responding to climate change requires a two-pronged strategic approach: mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation strategies aim to reduce emissions and stabilize the level of GHGs, whereas adaptive strategies focus on adapting to current climate related changes. Both strategies are of equal importance, as the world desperately needs to reduce emissions while still responding to vulnerable communities and environments that have been impacted by climate change. To learn more about specific mitigative and adaptive strategies refer to the graphic on page 3 of this newsletter!

See below to understand the difference between climate and weather:

Weather



Weather is the conditions of the atmosphere over a short period of time.

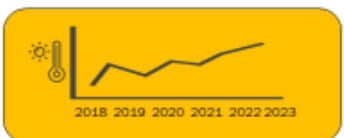


VS

Climate



Climate is the average weather conditions in a specific area over a long period of time.



Interesting Fact:



“Reducing emissions of greenhouse gasses through better transport, food, and energy use choices can result in improved health, particularly through reduced air pollution”

Source: “World Health Organization”

Thinking like an Emergency Manager: Tackling the Impacts of Climate Change

The foundation of emergency planning is built upon hazard and risk assessments. In healthcare emergency management, as part of our planning process we conduct annual Hazard Vulnerability Assessments (HVA) for each of our hospitals and outpatient facilities. These assessments include the identification and analysis of potential threats against our organization. Severe weather and the impacts associated with it continues to have a high relative risk percentage each year making it one of the top threats against our hospitals and facilities. The higher the risk percentage, the more likely this hazard is going to impact the organizations' ability to continue normal operations.

Planning for severe weather is not new for emergency management professionals, but the understanding of how weather patterns are changing due to climate change is putting a unique perspective on how we can best prepare for the impacts that severe weather brings. It is important to recognize that climate change exacerbates hazards such as extreme heat, flooding, droughts, wildfires, and severe storms. It is becoming increasingly more important to have organizational resiliency against such hazards. To build resilient healthcare organizations, emergency management leadership should ask and consider the following:

- ❖ Are annual risk assessments conducted?
- ❖ Is severe weather and other impacts related to climate change addressed?
- ❖ Are there redundant utility systems in place? If so, are they maintained on a regular basis?
- ❖ Are your organizations prepared to adhere to everchanging "climate legislation" being proposed by local and state government?
- ❖ Can your facilities generate its own power?
- ❖ Have you begun the process to identify groups within the communities you serve who are disproportionately at risk for climate related harm?

Health System Highlights: Northwell's Pledge to Build a Climate-Resilient Healthcare System

Northwell has a mission to improve the health of the communities we serve. Northwell leadership and team members must deliver on that mission even when external events challenge our ability to do so. Whether it is a pandemic or climate crisis, we will always adapt and change to meet this mission.

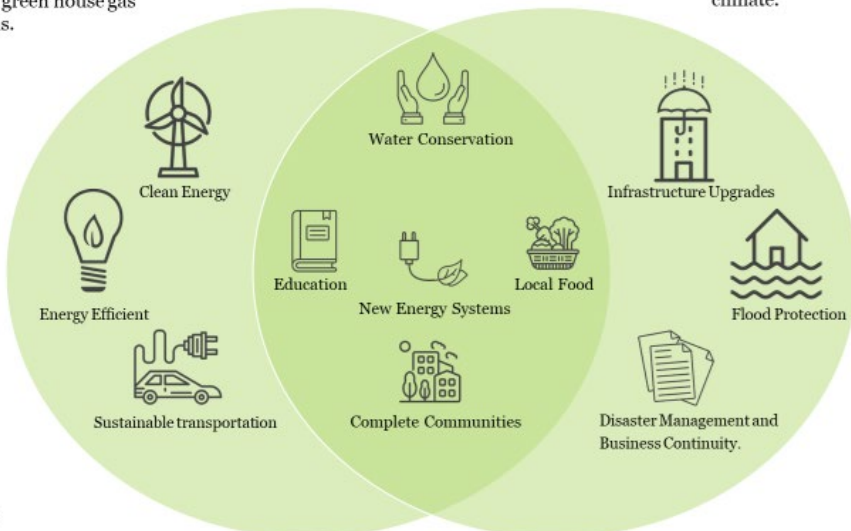
During the summer of 2022, Northwell Health announced that they have joined the Healthcare Climate Council and signed the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Health Care Sector Pledge. Healthcare organizations who sign the Health Care Sector Pledge make a commitment to reduce emissions and meet climate resiliency goals. More specifically, Northwell leadership has committed to meet with the Biden Administration to reduce emissions 50 percent by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Additionally, Northwell is developing a climate resiliency plan to complement the HHS Health Care Sector Pledge. The climate resiliency plan is comprised of three pillars that focus on emergency preparedness, infrastructure upgrades, and community health.

Mitigation

Reduce climate change by lowering green house gas emissions.

Adaptation

Adapting to life in a changing climate.



May 2023 MARO Monthly Topic:
Hurricane Preparedness



Submit your questions about climate resiliency by scanning the QR code!



 Northwell Health

MARO Monthly

Emergency Management Podcast



Hosted by Brian O'Neill

We encourage you to listen to our May 2023 podcast, hosted by Vice President of Business Continuity, Brian O'Neill. This month's podcast features Mike Rohan, Corporate Director of Energy Engineering and Infrastructure at Northwell Health and Dan Baier, Director of Operations at Northwell Crisis Management. Throughout the podcast Rohan and Baier discuss the impacts of climate change on hospital systems and ways in which to make health care organizations more resilient.

[LISTEN HERE](#)

UPCOMING COURSES



Course: Climate Smart Communities

Date: Ongoing

Location: Webinar – Register through DOH LMS



Course: Developing and Implementing Climate & Health Adaptations

Date: Ongoing

Location: Webinar – Register through DOH LMS



Course: Heat Related Illness- Risk Factors, Types & Prevention

Date: Ongoing

Location: Webinar- Register through DOH LMS

For the full list of upcoming courses visit the Crisis Management Website!



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