

# Maine Disaster Behavioral Health

*Helping Our Communities in Times of Disaster*



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## *Maine Behavioral Health Provider Disaster Preparedness Survey Summary Results, May 2013*

A survey of providers, including organizations such as hospitals, substance abuse providers, mental health and crisis providers and community support programs, was distributed by the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention to further the exploration of regional preparedness. The results of this survey provide a snapshot of the current state of community preparedness. Survey results show that agencies have realized different levels of planning and have diverse capabilities with respect to disaster response. The data also provide an opportunity for these groups to review, further develop, expand and strengthen each community's preparedness capabilities.

### **Provider Profile**

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Eighty-two (82) respondents completed the survey. Of the agencies responding:

- 80.5% identified themselves as mental health agencies, and 28% were substance abuse agencies
- 63.4% of agencies offered behavioral health services, 59.8% offered mental health assessment, and 57.3% offered mental health services. Over 73 different services were offered
- The most common method of service provision was through outpatient services (59.8%), community-based services (58.5%) and on-site services (46.3%)

Providers from across the state responded to the survey:

- 30.5% were located in Cumberland county, 23.2 % in Kennebec and Penobscot counties respectively, and 22.0 % in Androscoggin county

Providers **served clients** in all of Maine's sixteen counties:

- 45.1% served clients in Cumberland county
- 39.0% served clients in Androscoggin and Kennebec counties respectively
- 37.8% served clients in Waldo county

### **Disaster Behavioral Health Preparedness Planning**

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The existence and scope of each organization's disaster response planning varies widely:

- Nearly half of all providers (48.8%, n=40) indicated they had some type of disaster response plan

For those organizations **with a disaster response plan (n=40)**:

- 55% (n=22) were able to identify the County Emergency Management Agency with whom they are affiliated
- 53.8% (n=21) conduct disaster response drills/exercises

### **Other Agency Disaster Response Strategies**

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Agencies indicated other details in relation to their level of disaster response planning:

- 36.6% (n=30) indicated the agency had some **type of strategy** (not necessarily a written plan) for assuring ongoing treatment for mental health or substance abuse clients in the event of a disaster
- 19.5% (n=16) indicated having no strategy
- 14.6% (n=12) were not sure if their agency had a disaster response strategy
- 25.6% (n=21) indicated having a partial plan and 20.7% (n=17) indicated having a complete plan, most however, did not have a disaster response plan

## Disaster Planning For Employees

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For all providers responding to the survey (n=82):

- 26.8% (n=22) have disaster response plans that include provisions for the mental health needs of agency employees
- 41.4% (n=34) have disaster response plans that identify essential staff positions that would need to report for duty in the event of a disaster
- 36.6% (n=30) have disaster response plans in which staff members who would need to report to duty in the event of a disaster are aware of that designation

For agencies indicating they had a written disaster response plan (n=40):

- 50.0% (n=20) have disaster response plans that include provisions for the mental health needs of agency employees
- 75.0% (n=30) have disaster response plans that identify essential staff positions that would need to report for duty in the event of a disaster
- 65.0% (n=26) have disaster response plans in which staff members who would need to report to duty in the event of a disaster are aware of that designation

Staff training in disaster preparedness:

- 25.6% (n=21) of agencies provide periodic orientation and training for staff on disaster response
- 31.6% (n=26) of agencies provide cross-training for essential personnel
- 22.0% (n=18) of agencies provide periodic training for staff who have responsibilities to respond in an emergency

Communication with staff in disaster situations:

- 51.2% (n=42) of agencies maintain a current list of contact information of skilled staff
- 39.0% (n=32) of agencies have current personnel roster information available in emergencies
- 28.0% (n=23) of agencies have a backup notification plan

## Community Connections

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Provider connections with the broader community with regard to disaster response:

- Nearly half (45.3%, n=29) of all providers maintain connections, in the form of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), with other support agencies with respect to disaster planning and activities
- 8.5% (n=7) of agencies have an agreement with the local county Emergency Management Agency (EMA)
- 8.5% (n=7) of agencies have an individual who is a designated representative to the county EOC and attended the two-day training Disaster Behavioral Health training
- 4.8% (n=4) of agencies indicated the designated individual is a fully registered member of the Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team

## Disaster Planning For Clients

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Organizations acknowledge responsibility for different populations following a disaster:

- 48.7% (n=40) include clients and 17.1% (n=14) include client families
- 39.0% (n=32) include staff and 8.5% (n=7) include staff families
- 12.2% (n=10) include the local community and 8.5% (n=7) include the public

While less than half of all agencies indicate they have responsibility for a particular population (i.e. clients, client families, staff, staff families, the community, or the public) following a disaster, only 41.5% (n=34) have the **capability to assess needs** following a disaster.

Agency response capabilities following a disaster:

- 17.0% (n=14) have support literature available
- 19.5% (n=16) have a formal plan for contacting high-risk clients/groups post-disaster.
- 13.4% (n=11) have a plan for expanding their response capability
- 36.6% (n=30) maintain a list of access information (phone, computer, text, etc.) for support services