

Emergency Operations (Response) Plan: A Short Guide for Attending, Fellow and Resident Physicians

Northwestern Medicine hospitals' Emergency Operations Plans are activated when there is an event that disrupts our ability to provide routine services. Below is a *brief* overview.

ICS (Incident Command System) is the structure followed during NM emergency operations events. There is an Incident Commander (IC) who directs overall response for every emergency operations event. Physician communications are coordinated by the chief of staff and chief medical officer.

General responsibilities – physicians

Do your best to ensure the safety of patients, visitors, staff *and* yourself.

- **If you recognize an untoward event, report it immediately via the hospital emergency number: 5.5555.**
- In the event of an emergency, you may be contacted to report for duty any time your assistance is needed.
- Any additional responsibilities will be determined by the supervising attending physicians or chief residents.
- Keep available the sources of information regarding emergency events and hospital response (Epic alert, email, NM Interactive, Physician Forum, paging system, 312.926.INFO [for major events], radio stations, etc.).
- Please wear your up-to-date hospital ID when reporting to the hospital.

If you see fire or smell smoke

Remember the mnemonic “RACE.”

- **R**ace: Rescue those in immediate danger
- **A**larm: Pull fire alarm and call 5.5555
- **C**onfine and **C**lear: Close doors and windows AND clear corridors of ALL equipment
- **E**xtinguish or **E**vacuate: Extinguish if it is safe and you have a buddy. Evacuate if instructed to do so by firefighters or the IC.

Mass medical care or mass casualty event

This plan is activated when there is a sudden influx of patients coming into the hospital due to a community incident or widespread illness.

- Your responsibilities will be determined by the supervising attending physicians or residents.
- You may be asked to assist with the care of existing or incoming patients.

Infectious disease emergencies or outbreaks

NM has mechanisms in place for early recognition of infectious disease outbreaks.

- If there is a developing outbreak or a suspicious infectious disease, contact the medical director, Infection Control and Prevention, who will investigate, verify the outbreak and recommend the activation of our Biological Emergency Response plan.
- Follow recommended infection control precautions when caring for infected patients or in areas identified as hazardous.
- Adhere to posted isolation precautions and wear appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Stay home if you have fever ≥ 100 degrees F and a cough, sore throat or runny nose. **Don't infect others.**

Armed intruder event

Assess your situation and in any order, Run, Hide, Fight. Personal safety is the No. 1 priority.

- Run to an exit or your planned escape route. Leave your belongings behind and keep your hands visible.
- Hide in an area outside of the intruder's view. Block entry to your hiding place, and lock and/or barricade the doors, if possible. Silence your cell phone and pager. Turn off the lights to give the appearance of an empty area.
- Fight if you feel your life is in danger.
- When law enforcement arrives, put your hands above your head and follow instructions given by police.

Hospital evacuation (new plan)

The decision to evacuate may be made by the fire department, law enforcement or the hospital's IC. You will receive a notification as soon as possible after the decision is made.

- On-site physicians will be asked to assess patients for discharge and possible transfer to other hospitals and complete documentation for transfer.
- You may be asked to assist with transport of patients to a designated staging area or care for them in the staging area.
- When the evacuation is complete, you will receive instructions on where to report before leaving the hospital.