

One Bite at a Time: Testing Pieces of Your Plans with Virtual Drills & Progressive Exercises

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Learning Objectives

- Describe effective strategies for leveraging exercise participation as a tool to build engagement within the healthcare community and recruit new members to healthcare coalitions
- Recognize the advantages of conducting short, focused exercises in testing small pieces of healthcare emergency plans within a community setting
- List practical tips and strategies for planning and executing these exercises efficiently, even with limited time and resources

Exercises....

- can be time-consuming, intimidating and expensive
- are required by CMS and licensing entities
- are essential for testing plans and ensuring readiness
- should be high impact, low cost and easy to conduct in a short time period



The Solution?

- Healthcare Coalition-based virtual drills!
- These exercises are simple and effective
- Meet the requirement for community-based exercises
- Allow facilities to test specific plans
- Are a great way for Healthcare Coalitions to recruit new members and engage existing members!



The Origin



- The first virtual drill, Operation Protect & Secure, was developed by Seminole County Emergency Management in 2017
- Launched during National Preparedness Week, the goal was to allow facilities to practice their lockdown plans
- Central Florida Disaster Medical Coalition partnered with Seminole County Emergency Management to take the drill region-wide
- The drill was a resounding success, with more than 220 organizations registered and more than 120 completing the exercise!
- The drill brought in almost 50 new Coalition members!




Expanding the Drills

- Operation Protect and Secure has been repeatedly annually, with increasing participation each year
- The formula was used to create other virtual drills
- The Great Tornado Drill was added in 2019, during Severe Weather Awareness week in February (repeated annually)
- A generator drill, Operation Generate Confidence, was added in June 2019 to kick off Hurricane Season (repeated annually)
- CFDMC has now added a fourth drill during the annual conference in December, giving organizations an opportunity to participate in a drill each quarter
- These drills have more than doubled Coalition membership!

Tampa Bay Health & Medical Preparedness Coalition Adapted the Virtual Drills

- In 2022, TBHMPC borrowed this virtual drill format, beginning with a generator drill in June, Operation Power Play
- Almost 50 organizations participated, most of which were new to Coalition exercises, showing the value of these drills
- In 2023, they added The Great Tornado Drill in February, along with 2 new drills.



The graphic for Operation Power Play features a yellow diamond-shaped sign with the text "HURRICANE SEASON AHEAD" set against a background of a satellite map of the Gulf of Mexico. To the right of the sign is a photograph of a high-voltage power transmission tower against a blue sky.

Operation Power Play

Tuesday, June 7th at 10am

[Register here.](#)

Join us for this community-based exercise to test health care facility power plans.

Tampa Bay Health & Medical Preparedness Coalition
Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas, Polk & Sumter Counties

Questions? Contact Hunter Zager at Hunter.Zager@TampaBayHMPC.org

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

- Register!
- Receive an alert on June 7th to set up your generator & run through the layout of your cooled space.
- We recommend turning on equipment, (but it's not required).
- Check carbon monoxide detectors.
- Take time to show staff what to do.
- Submit provided documentation as directed.
- You will receive an After Action Report for your participation.



The graphic for the 2023 Great Tornado Drill features a large, stylized illustration of a grey and white tornado. The text is arranged around and over the tornado.

2023 GREAT TORNADO DRILL

Tampa Bay Health & Medical Preparedness Coalition
Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas, Polk & Sumter Counties

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 8TH, 2023 AT 10AM

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
STEP 1: SIGN UP BELOW.
STEP 2: PRACTICE YOUR PLAN.
STEP 3: SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION OF PARTICIPATION.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Questions? Contact Hunter.Zager@TampaBayHMPC.org

TBMHPC Virtual Drills

- The Coalition Contract Challenge tasked healthcare organizations to verify their disaster contracts and MOUs and was held before the height of hurricane season
- In December, the Watchful Workplace Drill focused on workplace violence response plans
- These drills attracted organizations that did not have a history of community exercise participation, thus serving as a great introduction to exercises and the coalition
- The 2024 Great Tornado Drill had over 200 registrants, so numbers are growing!



The poster for the 2023 Coalition Contract Challenge features a green ambulance icon in the top left. The main title "2023 COALITION CONTRACT CHALLENGE" is in large white letters on an orange background. Below it, a blue box contains the text "REGISTER HERE" and "for this community based exercise to help you confirm your disaster plan contracts before you need them!". To the right, a green box with a white water drop icon is next to a blue box stating "THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH AT 10AM". The website "TAMPABAYHMPC.ORG" is at the bottom right.



The poster for the 2023 Watchful Workplace Drill features a circular image of a hospital lobby. The text "The Tampa Bay Health & Medical Preparedness Coalition presents" is at the top. The main title "2023 WATCHFUL WORKPLACE DRILL" is in large blue letters. Below it, a blue box contains the text "Enhance your organization's preparedness by exercising your lockdown/workplace violence plan during this upcoming community-based drill!". The date and time "TUESDAY DECEMBER 5TH, 2023 @ 2PM AT YOUR ORGANIZATION" are in yellow. A blue box with "Register Here." is below. At the bottom, a blue box contains the text "Questions? Contact Hunter Zager at Hunter.Zager@TampaBayHMPC.org". The website "TAMPABAYHMPC.ORG" is at the bottom right.

How to Conduct a Virtual Drill

- The Coalition partners with EM across the region to identify and plan for each drill
- A flyer is developed, providing details and allowing organizations to register
- Instructions on how to participate in the drill are provided in advance
- On the day of the drill, an alert is sent out to registered facilities
- The drill takes place at the individual facilities
- Following the drill, organizations submit a survey with a description of their exercise, what went well, and what can be improved
- The Coalition produces an AAR (with regional themes and individual facility information), including an improvement plan with instructions
- This meets CMS and licensure requirements for community-based drill with emergency management



Progressive Exercises

- TBHMPC has also developed a series of short, simple exercises for coalition meetings, called Progressive Exercises
- TBHMPC has 9 counties, each holding a county-level coalition meeting every other month
- A short exercise discussion takes place at each meeting
- The first series was The Volatile Visitor Exercise, broken into 3 modules of about 20 minutes each. After each module, homework is given for the next meeting, when the scenario progresses
- The exercise materials are also provided as handouts to take back to attendee organizations—to be utilized in staff meetings or leadership meetings
- The feedback on the progressive exercises has been extremely positive

Volatile Visitor Progressive Exercise



Volatile Visitor Exercise A Progressive Drill

Module 1: Initial Confrontation and Response

Focus: Recognizing and responding to the early stages of an agitated visitor's arrival.

Scenario for Module 1:

- In a healthcare clinic, an individual – Alex - arrives visibly upset about a family member's treatment and the long wait times. Alex begins to verbally express dissatisfaction in a manner that escalates tension among staff and patients.

Discussion Questions for Module 1:

- Early Recognition:**
 - What are the signs that staff should recognize as potential escalation of aggression?
 - How should staff initially engage with an agitated visitor like Alex to avoid escalation?
- Immediate Response:**
 - What are the first steps staff should take in response to Alex's behavior?
 - Discuss the importance of maintaining a safe environment for other patients and staff during such confrontations.
- Communication and Alert Procedures:**
 - How should staff communicate the situation internally without causing panic?
 - At what point should security or law enforcement be alerted, and how?



Volatile Visitor Exercise A Progressive Drill

Module 2: Escalation and Crisis Management

Focus: Managing escalated situations and implementing safety protocols.

Scenario for Module 2:

- Alex's behavior becomes more aggressive, creating a potentially threatening situation. The clinic staff must now manage this escalation effectively.

Discussion Questions for Module 2:

- Managing Escalation:**
 - What steps should be taken when an agitated visitor like Alex begins to threaten?
 - How should staff balance the need to de-escalate with ensuring the safety of patients?
- Safety Protocols and Law Enforcement Coordination:**
 - Discuss the decision-making process for initiating a lockdown or evacuation.
 - How should the clinic coordinate with law enforcement if the situation escalates beyond internal control?

Homework Actions for Module 2:

- Safety Protocol Drill:** Conduct a drill based on the scenario to practice lockdown and evacuation procedures.
- Communication Systems Review:** Assess the effectiveness of internal communication systems during emergencies.
- Coordination Plan with Law Enforcement:** Develop or review a coordination plan with law enforcement to engage law enforcement.



Volatile Visitor Exercise A Progressive Drill

Module 3: Post-Incident Recovery and Mental Health Support

Focus: Addressing the aftermath, supporting mental health, and learning from the incident.

Scenario for Module 3:

- The situation with Alex has been resolved, either through de-escalation or intervention by law enforcement, leaving staff and patients shaken.

Discussion Questions for Module 3:

- Post-Incident Debriefing and Support:**
 - What steps should the clinic take immediately following such an incident to support staff and patients?
 - How can the clinic provide mental health support to those affected by the incident?
- Lessons Learned and Policy Improvement:**
 - What can be learned from this incident in terms of crisis response and management?
 - How can these lessons inform future policy and training improvements?
- Long-Term Mental Health Strategies:**
 - What strategies can the clinic implement to address the long-term mental health needs of staff following such incidents?
 - How can the clinic foster a supportive environment that encourages open discussion about mental health and wellbeing?

Homework Actions for Module 3:

- Mental Health Resources Assessment:** Identify and assess available mental health resources and support systems for staff.

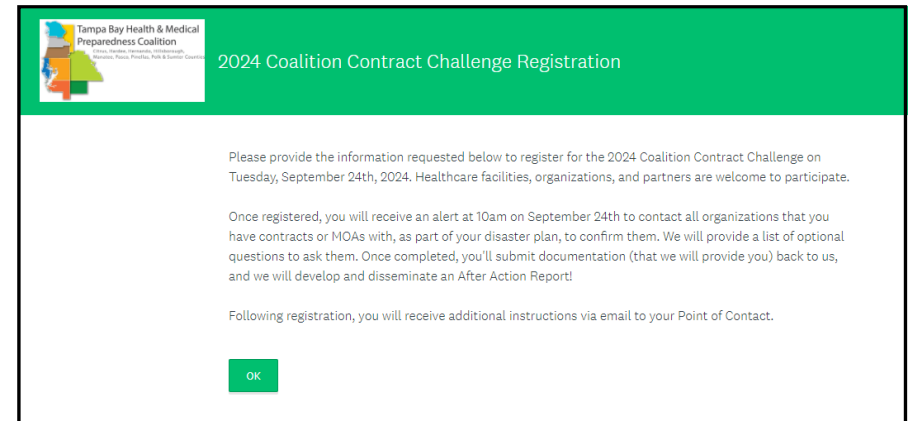
Benefits

- Both types of these simple, short exercises build engagement with healthcare organizations, emergency management, community partners, and Coalitions
- They attract all types of organizations, especially those not traditionally involved in larger community-based exercises
- They meet exercise requirements
- They are simple to plan and execute, and are virtually no cost
- They provide an opportunity to engage healthcare organizations in the need for preparedness (move them out of the “meet the requirement” mentality and into the “we must be ready” mindset)
- They are guaranteed to increase Healthcare Coalition membership!

Resources

For each of these exercises, CFDMC & TBHMPC will share:

- Flyers/registration process
- Instructions
- Scenarios
- Participation Surveys
- After Action Template/Improvement Plan



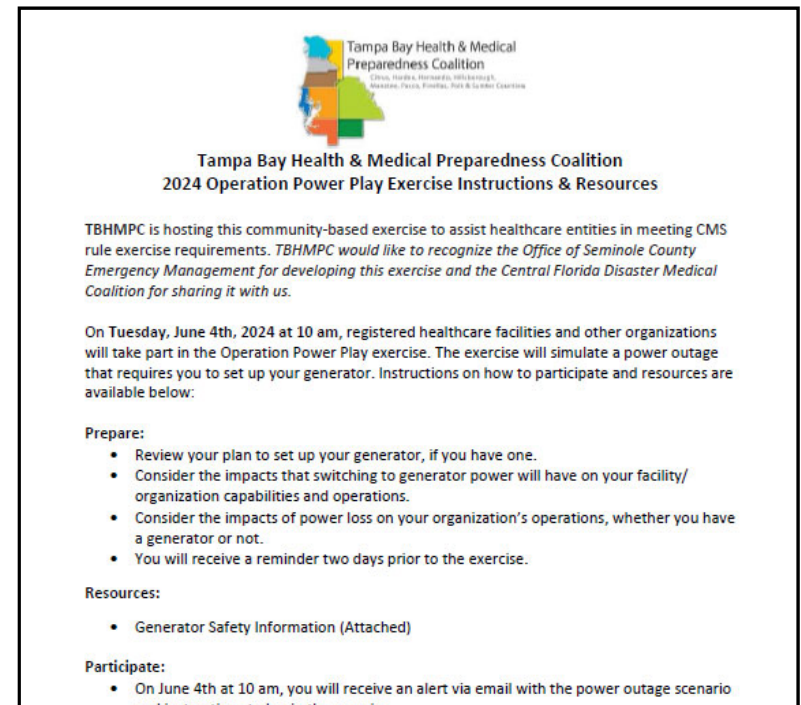
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2024 Coalition Contract Challenge Registration

Please provide the information requested below to register for the 2024 Coalition Contract Challenge on Tuesday, September 24th, 2024. Healthcare facilities, organizations, and partners are welcome to participate.

Once registered, you will receive an alert at 10am on September 24th to contact all organizations that you have contracts or MOAs with, as part of your disaster plan, to confirm them. We will provide a list of optional questions to ask them. Once completed, you'll submit documentation (that we will provide you) back to us, and we will develop and disseminate an After Action Report!

Following registration, you will receive additional instructions via email to your Point of Contact.



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Tampa Bay Health & Medical Preparedness Coalition 2024 Operation Power Play Exercise Instructions & Resources

TBHMPC is hosting this community-based exercise to assist healthcare entities in meeting CMS rule exercise requirements. TBHMPC would like to recognize the Office of Seminole County Emergency Management for developing this exercise and the Central Florida Disaster Medical Coalition for sharing it with us.

On Tuesday, June 4th, 2024 at 10 am, registered healthcare facilities and other organizations will take part in the Operation Power Play exercise. The exercise will simulate a power outage that requires you to set up your generator. Instructions on how to participate and resources are available below:

Prepare:

- Review your plan to set up your generator, if you have one.
- Consider the impacts that switching to generator power will have on your facility/ organization capabilities and operations.
- Consider the impacts of power loss on your organization's operations, whether you have a generator or not.
- You will receive a reminder two days prior to the exercise.

Resources:

- Generator Safety Information (Attached)

Participate:

- On June 4th at 10 am, you will receive an alert via email with the power outage scenario and instructions to begin the exercise.

Questions?

For additional information contact:

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