

16th Annual Great Plains Disaster Behavioral Health Conference; Building Resilient Communities

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SAMHSA & Disaster Response

SAMHSA's primary role in disaster readiness, response and recovery is to support the network of local, state and non-governmental organizations and systems to meet the needs of their stakeholders by the provision of support, technical assistance, communication, coordination and consultation



Support

- SAMHSA (CMHS) operates FEMA's Crisis Counseling and Training Program in jurisdictions receiving Individual Assistance Presidential Disaster declarations
 - These Individual Assistance awards are intended to support jurisdictions for 90 days as they develop their Regular Services Program (RSP) grants
 - The RSP grants allow jurisdictions to expand and enhance services and training, for the next nine months to total one year of services
- SAMHSA also provides for the Disaster Distress Helpline that gives direct crisis services and assistance via telephone and text 24 hours a day, seven days a week
 - The Office of Communications issues a press release announcing the availability of the DDH within minutes of learning of an emergency



Technical Assistance and Grant Flexibility

- SAMHSA Center staff (CSAT, CMHS, CSAP) provide flexibility to help impacted areas addressing leniencies in grant requirements as needed including:
 - utilization of block grant dollars
 - recovery and navigation of the emergency systems
 - distribution of guidance addressing Emergency Methadone Dosing to be distributed to Opioid treatment programs (OTPs)
 - methadone protocol for use in shelters
 - assistance to the National Disaster Medical System to enhance the tracking of individuals with behavioral health needs
 - providing computerized maps to the incident management team showing behavioral health service utilization by local regions for planning purposes



Enhanced Technical Assistance

- Provided both virtually and in person allowing jurisdictions to submit fundable Crisis Counseling Program grants on time
- ensure the impacted areas employ comprehensive emergency response operations to maintain medication assisted treatment continuity of care
- ease the acceptance of Naloxone into shelters
- close expert level contact with partners at the state, local, federal and non-governmental levels serve to maximize outcomes of survivor care
- SAMHSA's Regional Administrators enhance bi-directional sharing and communications with behavioral health leadership via existing relationships in the impacted regions, assist in planning, problem solving, and leveraging of SAMHSA's ongoing grant programs to address disaster related needs.



Communication

- SAMHSA staff (central and regional) full integration in Federal and State Emergency Management allows for the communication of needs, facilitates joint work plans, and where possible, resolution
- SAMHSA distributes hundreds of informational resources to providers, responders and survivors through:
 - our web page,
 - social media postings,
 - printed and electronic materials such as
 - language specific tip sheets, & posters,
 - Disaster AP and media interviews
 - Disaster kits and suicide prevention wallet cards
- List of free informational resources available from the online "SAMHSA Store" useful in emergencies, including a variety of translations



Coordination

- Establishment of the SAMHSA Liaison Officer position within the HHS Secretary's Operation Center (2017) enhanced SAMHSA's ability to efficiently identify, communicate and fulfill needs as they arise.
- SAMHSA /Behavioral Health Liaisons are placed in both the Incident Response Coordination Team and in the Joint Field Office addressing Recovery
- Establishment of a Disaster Volunteer Workgroup at SAMHSA identifies those civilian employees willing to serve on these teams to meet the staffing needs
 - works to train these volunteers in the skills needed
 - provides a structure to support and enhance their experiences



Coordination & Consultation

SAMHSA's Regional Administrators are the front line coordinators between the Field Office on the ground, the State Authorities (Behavioral Health, Justice, Education, etc.) the Regional Emergency Coordinator the Volunteer Organizations and community/tribal members impacted

Please feel free to contact me any time

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SAMHSA Publications:

<https://store.samhsa.gov/>

