Local Libraries’ Emergency Preparedness Partnership Ensures Mutual Aid & Promotes Disaster Information Outreach

PROJECT GOALS

■ Determine the potential for a partnership among five medical libraries within walking distance of each other to provide mutual support in the event of a disaster affecting one or more of the libraries.
■ Assess the ability to coordinate disaster information outreach activities and collections among the five libraries for the benefit of their parent institutions, library users and local community.

MUTUAL AID PLAN

The partner libraries wrote and signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for mutual aid. The MOU is based on resources from the NN/LM Emergency Preparedness Toolkit. The MOU and supporting materials were written and compiled during one afternoon meeting that will repeat annually. The MOU is based on determining the most likely disaster scenarios for the Washington, DC area. The goal is to keep the process as simple as possible. NLM’s Disaster Information Management Research Center provides logistical and moral support.

PARTNERS

■ The libraries created the Bethesda Medical Libraries Emergency Preparedness Partnership (BMLEPP) to aid each other in an emergency affecting library operations.

Suburban Hospital

Suburban Hospital Medical Library, Bethesda, MD
- One general hospital library
- Private community hospital, 250 beds
- Only trauma center in the county, 11 in Maryland

E. B. Stitt Library, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD
- Small staff hospital library
- US Department of Defense military hospital, 250 beds
- Third largest Navy hospital in US, women’s only and Harbor-Donna campus

Stitt Library, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD
- NIH Library, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD
- NIH Clinical Center (NCC), 234 beds
- Federal research hospital for all NIH Institutes and some parts of HHS
- Research gardens only

Suburban Hospital Library participates in a 45-minute drill. (http://nnlm.gov/disastr-outreach-lib.html)

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the event of a disaster, partners know each other, can find each other, are familiar with each other’s libraries and know what the partnership can offer each parent institution. Communications are enhanced by using the email list at list.nih.gov/archives/disastr-outreach-lib.html.

The process of developing an MOU can be kept simple. A concern for mutual disaster planning allows institutions to rise above their usual barriers to coordinating with each other and instead focus on the greater good.

http://nnlm.gov/ep

James A. Zimbale Learning Resource Center, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Bethesda, MD
- Academic Health Sciences Library at US Department of Defense military university
- No hospital
- Health sciences curriculum includes large-scale humanization assistance and disaster response

E. B. Stitt Library, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD
- Small staff hospital library
- US Department of Defense military hospital, 250 beds
- Third largest Navy hospital in US, women’s only and Harbor-Donna campus

National Library of Medicine

Disaster Information Management Research Center, National Library of Medicine
- 4 staff/librarian web access to NN/LM collections, “world’s largest medical library"
- No hospital
- Support for libraries providing disaster information outreach to their communities

Library

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