

New York State Department of Health

Advisory

September 7, 2018

Tropical Storm Florence Guidance for Providers of Health and Residential Care

The New York City (NYC-EM) and New York State (NYSOEM) Offices of Emergency Management are closely monitoring the forecasted path of Tropical Storm Florence. Although it is too early to determine the final track of the storm, we are reminding providers of important preparedness measures to be taken in advance of any potential landfall. Tropical Storm Florence could grow in strength, bring high surf, storm surge flooding, tropical-storm force winds and power outages to areas of New York City, Long Island shoreline and the Lower Hudson Valley.

While any potential impact of this storm will most likely affect the NYC Metropolitan Area and collar counties, we are providing this general guidance for all facilities in the State to follow, until more certainty of storm track and impact are determined.

Should the storm make landfall next week and create a need for evacuation of any facilities in the State, we are reminding facilities that the eFINDS patient/resident tracking application on the Health Commerce System (HCS) must be used to track the movement of any evacuating individuals. The name of the operation in eFINDS to use for entering data for this storm is: **“2018-09-09 COASTAL STORM FLORENCE NEW YORK STATE.”** More information about accessing the eFINDS application is contained further down in this advisory.

During and following the storm, providers needing assistance should make requests for assistance through their local Emergency Operations Center (EOC) or if the EOC is not activated, their local Office of Emergency Management. It is important to note that facilities should rely on these resources as a backup and not as the primary source should they need supplies, pre-storm. Facilities in need of evacuation should immediately notify their NYSDOH Regional Office. Regional office business hour contacts, and 24/7 Duty Officer contact information is attached.

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) – Office of Health Emergency Preparedness (OHEP) and Office of Primary Care and Health Systems Management (OPCHSM) are recommending that healthcare and residential providers conduct pre-storm planning and preparations. These activities may include (NOTE: not all activities apply to all types of provider):

1. Prepare your facility

- Review with staff the facility evacuation and emergency response plans, including plans for loss of power and/or water; flooding; vertical, horizontal or out of facility evacuation arrangements and protocols; applicable mutual aid plans; and local and regional emergency contact information.

- Consider alternate staffing arrangements; shifts and management of staffing shortages due to transportation impacts; the securing of needed supplies and preparations for staff that remain on site if roadways are not passable; how to handle communications outages.
- Review and update patient/resident census and status by Transportation Asset Level (TALs) Categories* and related transportation asset needs.
- Review procedures for discharge and other methods to reduce facility census.
- Test and confirm operations of emergency generator; confirm or acquire adequate generator fuel supply is onsite for at least 96 hours and emergency lighting.
- Review communications procedures, including primary and back-up alternate systems including radios.
- Ensure adequacy of food service, water, pharmacy, medical and environmental service supplies at facility for at least 96 hours.
- Ensure adequate fuel, oxygen, and medical gases and other general supplies to last a period of 24 hour prior to and 72 hours following the storm.
- **Be ready to use key NYSDOH Health Commerce System (HCS) Applications for Planning, Data Sharing and Receiving of Notifications.**

Assure there are staff on every shift with active HCS accounts and HCS Communications Directory Role assignment to enable your facility/agency to comply with, per regulation, ** requests for essential data, particularly information needed to prepare for, and respond to the impact of emergency events. See details of essential HCS applications in bullet #4 below.

2. Prepare your staff

- Evaluate staffing levels, particularly plan for shift changes that may be compromised if the storm makes transportation routes impassable and begin to alert staff
- Encourage staff to develop family disaster plans, to include pet and child care

3. Prepare your patients and residents

- Plan to communicate your plans with patients, residents and their families/caregivers

4. Be ready to use essential HCS data applications, including:

- **The Facility Profile Application (hospitals, nursing homes and adult care facilities (ACFs) only)** – this application provides important information that is used in key decisions during a Health Evacuation Center (HEC) activation and allows you to make and confirm send/receive arrangements in the event of evacuation.
 - ***Access to the Facility Profile Application:*** The HCS Communications Directory Role that must be assigned for access to this application on the

HCS is: “*Facility Profile Coordinator*”.

Your HCS Coordinator can assign staff to this role in the HCS Communications Directory.

- **Facilities that are in evacuation zones and/or are at risk for flooding and have not made receiving arrangements with other facilities should use the application now to make receiving arrangements with facilities out of evacuation zones.**
 - **Facilities that have already made such arrangements should contact their receiving partners to verify that these arrangements are still tenable.**
- **Health Electronic Response Data System (HERDS)** - HERDS surveys may be conducted with **Hospitals, ACFs, Nursing Homes, Homecare Agencies and Hospices** to collect information regarding potential facility beds needed or beds available for evacuation efforts.
- **If these surveys are activated, all facilities, both in and out of evacuation zones, MUST respond.** Additionally, a survey designed specifically for Homecare and Hospice providers may also be deployed through the HERDS system.
 - **Access to HERDS:** Your HCS Coordinator can assign staff to the proper roles in the HCS Communications Directory to grant access to HERDS if you need additional staff to have access to the system.
 - The following HCS Communications Directory Roles provide access to staff in the HCS Communications Directory for access to HERDS:

For Hospitals: *HERDS Data Manager, or HERDS Data Reporter, or HERDS Survey Reporter*

For Nursing Homes: *Nursing Home Data Reporter*

For ACFs: *Data Reporter*

For Homecare agencies (CHHAs and LHCSAs): *Administrator, Data Reporter, Director of Patient Services, Emergency Response Coordinator, and HPN Coordinator*

For Hospices: *Administrator, Data Reporter, Director of Patient Services, Emergency Response Coordinator and HPN Coordinator*

- **eFINDS Patient/Resident Tracking Application (hospitals, nursing homes ACFs and ICF/IID only):** In the event that evacuation of hospitals, nursing homes or adult care facilities becomes necessary, the NYSDOH is reminding facilities that they must use the eFINDS system to track the movement of all patients and residents between sending (evacuating) and receiving facilities.

- **Ensure you know where your eFINDS supplies, i.e., barcode scanner, wrist bands, and paper tracking logs are stored and that you will have staff available on all shifts who can use the eFINDS system.**
 - **Access to eFINDS:** HCS Communications Directory Roles to which staff must be assigned for access to eFINDS: *eFINDS Data Reporting Administrator* or *eFINDS Data Reporter*.
 - **Should evacuations become necessary**, the name of the operation to be used in the eFINDS application for reporting data for this event has been provided on the opening page of this advisory. To reiterate, the name of the operation for this storm is: **2018-09-09 COASTAL STORM FLORENCE NEW YORK STATE**. Should evacuations become necessary, NYSDOH will send out a reminder alert to facilities to begin preparing their patients and residents with wristbands and registering their wristband barcodes in the eFINDS system; and reminding facilities once again of the name of the Evacuation Operation in eFINDS.
 - Make sure that staff who have been trained on the use of the system are available to perform this function.
 - For help with eFINDS use, please send email to: efinds@health.ny.gov. eFINDS quick reference cards and self-paced training are available on the HCS. Just enter “eFINDS” in the search box on HCS, and all eFINDS help resources will be available.
- **The HCS Communications Directory** - all business and emergency contact information for key administrators and roles in the Communications Directory must be updated and accurate. This contact information is used by the NYSDOH for sending emergency and informational notifications to providers. If this data is not up to date, providers may not receive key information.
- Your HCS Coordinator can assist in updating this information and assigning roles to access the applications mentioned above.

Thank you for your attention to these important preparations. The NYSDOH will provide additional notifications as the storm progresses.

- * TAL Categories:
 TAL 1: Non-Ambulatory - Individuals unable to travel in a sitting position (e.g. require stretcher, are ventilator dependent or bariatric)
 TAL 2: Wheelchair - Individuals who cannot walk on their own but are able to sit for an extended period of time
 TAL 3: Ambulatory - Individuals with disabilities who are able to walk on their own without physical assistance.
- ** For Hospitals and Nursing Homes: Title10 NYCRR §§ 400.10;
 For Adult Care Facilities: Title 18 NYCRR §§ 487.12 (k) and 488.12 (m) and 490.12(k)
 For CHHAs, LHCSAs and Hospice: Title10 NYCRR §§ 763.11(f), 766.9(o)

Roster of Contact Information for NYSDOH

For After Hours Emergencies:
(5:00 pm to 8:00 am weekdays, all day on weekends and holidays)
Contact the NYSDOH Duty Officer at:
866.881.2809 and select choice #1 for reporting an emergency.
You will be connected to speak to a live Duty Officer

For an emergency occurring during Business Hours:
Contact your facility's Program at the Regional office that serves your county. Business hours
Program numbers are listed below for each Regional Office.

Capital District Regional Office

Counties Served: Albany, Clinton, Columbia, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery, Otsego, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren and Washington.

Program	Contact Person Title	Phone Number
Division of Hospitals and Diagnostic & Treatment Centers (includes Community Health Centers)	Regional Program Director	518.408.5329
Division of Nursing Homes and ICF/IID Surveillance	Regional Program Director	518.408.5372
Adult Care Provider and Assisted Living Surveillance	Regional Program Director	518.408.5287
Division of Home and Community Based Services	Regional Program Director	518.408.5287
<i>After Hours (5:00 pm to 8:00 am weekdays, all day on weekends and holidays)</i>	<i>NYSDOH Duty Officer</i>	<i>866.881.2809</i>

Central New York Regional Office

Counties Served: Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, St. Lawrence, Tioga and Tompkins.

Program	Title	Phone Number
Division of Hospitals and Diagnostic & Treatment Centers (includes Community Health Centers)	Regional Program Director	315.477.8592
Division of Nursing Homes and ICF/IID Surveillance	Regional Program Director	315.477.8472
Adult Care Provider and Assisted Living Surveillance	Regional Program Director	315.477.8472
Division of Home and Community Based Services	Regional Program Director	315.477.8472

After Hours (5:00 pm to 8:00 am weekdays, all day on weekends and holidays) ***NYSDOH Duty Officer*** ***866.881.2809***

Metropolitan Area Regional Office
New York City Office -- Counties Served: Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens and Richmond.
Central Islip Office -- Counties Served: Nassau and Suffolk.
New Rochelle Office -- Counties Served: Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester.

Program	Title	Phone Number
Division of Hospitals and Diagnostic & Treatment Centers (includes Community Health Centers)	Regional Program Director	New York City and New Rochelle: 212.417-5990 Central Islip: 631.851.4300
Division of Nursing Homes and ICF/IID Surveillance	Regional Program Director	New York City: 212.417.4999 New Rochelle: 914.654.7058 Central Islip: 631.851.3612
Adult Care Provider and Assisted Living Surveillance Division of Home and Community Based Services	Regional Program Director	New York City: 212.417.4440 Central Islip: 631.851.3098
Division of Home and Community Based Services	Regional Program Director	New York City: 212.417.4921 New Rochelle: 914.654.7000
<i>Off Hours (5:00 pm to 8:00 am weekdays, all weekends and holidays)</i>	<i>NYSDOH Duty Officer</i>	<i>866.881.2809</i>