



REGION 11 CHICAGO EMS SYSTEM POLICY	Title: Response to a System-Wide Crisis
	Section: Transportation
	Approved: EMS Medical Directors Consortium
	Effective: December 6, 2023

RESPONSE TO A SYSTEM-WIDE CRISIS

I. A variety of crises may occur that create intense demand for EMS and Emergency Department resources within the Region 11 Chicago EMS Systems. Such crises may include a mass casualty incident, a heat emergency, a respiratory infection surge or pandemic, or a terrorist act involving a nuclear, biological, chemical or industrial agent which overloads Emergency Department resources.

II. When faced with an impending or actual system-wide crisis, the following procedure should be followed:

- A. Any EMS System participant suspecting or knowing of an event that could precipitate a system-wide crisis should contact the Resource Hospital. Awareness of a system-wide crisis may originate with any EMS system participant, including an ambulance service provider (e.g., mass casualty incident), EMS personnel (e.g., heat emergency), or a participating hospital (e.g., respiratory infection surge).
- B. The Resource Hospital EMS Coordinator and EMS Medical Director will assess the information and seek confirmation prior to declaring a system-wide crisis.
- C. Once a system-wide crisis is confirmed, the Resource Hospital will:
 - 1. Notify the following:
 - a. Other EMS Coordinators and EMS Medical Directors in Region 11
 - b. Regional Hospital Coordinating Center (RHCC) Coordinator
 - c. The RHCC will notify IDPH
 - d. The RHCC will notify CDPH
 - e. Region 11 ambulance service providers, as indicated
 - f. The RHCC will notify adjacent RHCC Coordinators
 - 2. Assure that participating hospitals within the EMS System are informed of the crisis, and request that steps be taken to avoid hospital diversion/ambulance bypass, and alert them to the possibility of having to mobilize additional staff and resources and/or implement internal surge plans.
 - 3. Provide ongoing monitoring of the situation and assist with communication between the hospitals, ambulance service providers, and appropriate governmental agencies.

III. System-Wide Crisis Response Coordination

- A. The Regional Hospital Coordinating Center (RHCC) serves as the lead entity responsible for coordinating health and medical emergency response in its region as part of the regional health care coalition.



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- B. Regional health care coalitions may also be involved, which are groups of hospitals, local health departments, and emergency management personnel that serve a pivotal role in assisting during a pandemic or disaster response and are a crucial resource to hospitals when they are experiencing surges or resource limitations.
- C. The RHCC, in coordination with the regional health care coalition, may coordinate distribution of resources during a public health emergency to hospitals and health care providers.
- D. The Resource Hospital EMS Coordinator, EMS Medical Director, and RHCC Coordinator, together with the OEMC and the CFD Deputy Fire Commissioner, will closely monitor the overall EMS System operational impact.
- E. CFD may request the help of private ambulance service providers as well as activate additional staff and equipment.

IV. Syndromic Surveillance of Patients with Similar Symptoms

- A. If a participating hospital is noting a trend of increased frequency of similar symptoms, including potential drug overdoses, the Resource Hospital EMS Coordinator or EMS Medical Director shall be notified.
- B. The Resource Hospital EMS Coordinator and RHCC Coordinator will monitor the situation and, if necessary, notify IDPH, CDPH and ambulance service providers.