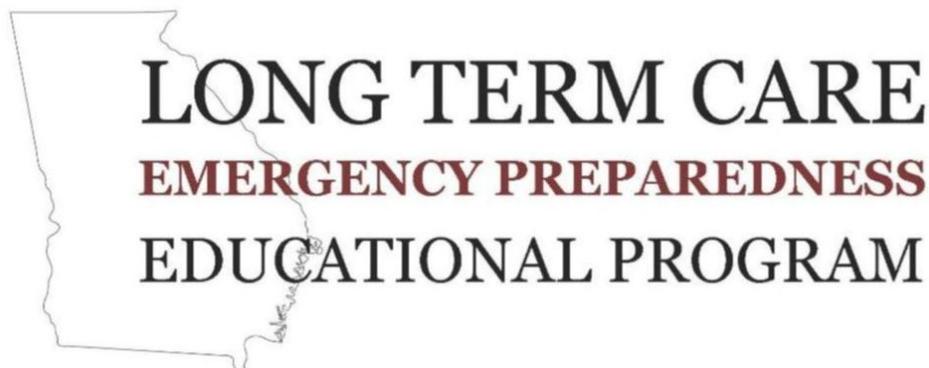


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Quarterly Newsletter - Winter 2022

[GA LTCEPEP Webpage](#)

Winter Focus Area: Mitigation Strategies

This is the final quarterly e-newsletter for the GA LTCEPEP as the program will end February 27, 2022. To end the series, we will discuss mitigation strategies you can continuously improve upon at the facility-level for years to come. As a reminder, all four years of previous newsletters are available here:

<https://idm.publichealth.uga.edu/galtcepnewsletters/>

Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Ability to Provide Care

There are four key areas that affect your facility's ability to provide care for your residents. They are: space, staff, supplies, and systems. See

Space

There are several spaces within your facility that are required to provide care on a normal day. During a disaster, those spaces can often be modified and used for different functions.

Remember, facilities who were initially certified after October 1, 1990 must maintain a temperature range of 71* to 81* F. However, this does not apply to the entire building, only where residents are being cared for. If your facility's relocation plan is to move residents from their rooms to the dining area, make sure the space is large enough to hold them and staff who are caring for them.

If your resident care space is relocated within your facility or to an alternate care site after evacuating, consider what other staffing, supplies, and system needs will be necessary to provide care.

Other space considerations are listed below:

- Trim or remove trees or other landscaping near your facility's roofs, HVAC system, storage buildings, power lines or other areas which could be impacted if a tree were to fall.
- Install 'frost-proof' faucets on exterior building spigots.
- If your facility is evacuated for an extended period, ensure your emergency preparedness plan includes HVAC and plumbing inspections before returning. If left unattended, water can remain in the pipes and produce Legionella bacteria.
- If your plan includes staff staying at the facility for multiple shifts, ensure there are spaces for them to rest and shower.
- Include other groups in your plans for space such as volunteers, residents' families, staff families, and their pets.
- Before a storm, your facility may order additional supplies such as medications, linens, or food and water. Where will those additional items be stored? Are there any special storing requirements such as refrigeration?
- If utilizing the incident command system (ICS) consider what space may be needed for an emergency operations center or incident command post.
- COVID-19 social distancing recommendations may impact your plans for space, so plan accordingly.

Staff

Clinical and non-clinical staff are critical in providing care to residents. See below for staffing considerations:

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Express the importance of family preparedness to your staff

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members. The more their household is prepared, the more likely

they are to report to your facility in times of need.

- Maintaining high resident and staff morale during a disaster is crucial. A [study](#) from nursing homes who were impacted by Hurricane Irma in 2017 found that facilities who focused on entertaining residents and staff, such as playing card games, experienced better health outcomes - physically and mentally.
- Ensure all staff know the facility staffing plan prior to a disaster. Implement refresher training before being impacted - if a hurricane is off the coast, review who is on the staff A team and B team and their schedules.
- Don't forget about volunteers! Talk to your community partners about local volunteer groups or get connected with the State Emergency Registry of Volunteers in Georgia (SERVGA) [here](#)

Supplies

There is a long list of supplies needed to provide care on a normal day, and even more may be needed during a disaster. When reviewing your plans, policies, and procedures, make sure each of the following categories are considered for supply needs.

- **Food**
 - additional food for family members who may arrive
 - non-perishable items
 - manual can openers
 - supplies for preparing and serving food in different areas, while transporting to another facility, or at an alternate care site
- **Water**
 - drinking water
 - bathing/showering
 - toileting
 - food preparation
 - linens/laundry
 - handwashing
 - many anti-bacterial bathing wipes
- **Temperature Regulation**
 - portable heaters
 - portable air conditioning units
 - fans
 - warm hats and blankets
 - emergency blankets
 - remember: extension cords cannot be used to connect portable generators to electrical equipment in the facility!
- **Medications/Medical Supplies**

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- pharmaceuticals
- medical gases including tanks
- medical equipment
- personal protective equipment

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- **Lighting**

- personal lighting: flashlights and headlamps
- area lighting: lanterns and light stands
- many extra batteries and chargers for lights

- **Transportation**

- resident tracking supplies or systems
- medical transport equipment: wheelchairs, beds, cloth litters, stair chairs, etc.
- proper storage of medical gases (e.g. tank holders, carts)
- bags and/or boxes to transport supplies

- **Sleep**

- Whenever staff or residents are sleeping somewhere unfamiliar, make the experience more comfortable with appropriate supplies: air mattresses, cots, blankets, pillows, sleep masks, ear plugs, fans, etc. Restful sleep is critical for physical and mental health, especially in a crisis.

Systems

The healthcare industry is becoming more reliant on a multitude of systems to operate on a daily basis. Think through each of the systems below and consider how to modify or replace each if a system outage or failure were to occur.

- **Utility Systems**

- power
- water
- natural gas
- medical gas
- sewage

- **Communications Systems**

- phone
- internet/intranet
- radio
- electronic health records

- **Transportation Systems**

- blocked roadways (incoming and outgoing paths)
- supply shortages

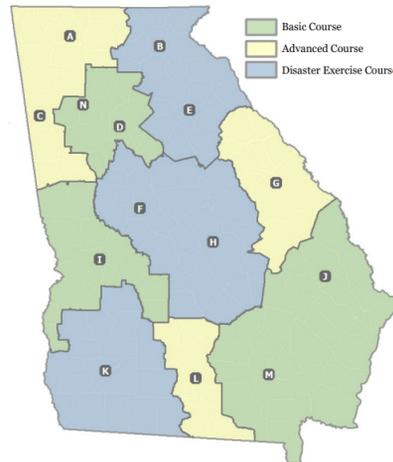
- **Suppliers/Services**

- pharmaceuticals
- linen service
- medical waste
- medical gases

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Upcoming LTC Emergency Preparedness Courses

All courses are currently scheduled for in-person attendance, subject to change due to COVID-19. Refer to the map below to see what courses are offered in your area and click the button to register for courses.



[Register for Courses Here](#)

LONG TERM CARE INFECTIOUS DISEASE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The University of Georgia's, Institute for Disaster Management has a **new educational program** funded through CMS Civil Money Penalty Funds. This program will include two courses on infectious diseases for certified long term care facility staff over the **next three years**.

This year, the **Infectious Disease Foundations Course** will be offered 14 times, once per healthcare coalition, from **October 2021 - May 2022**.

Click the button below for more course information and to register for courses.

CMS Appendix Z Related Requirements

For a complete list of requirements and recommendations, refer to CMS Appendix Z available for download [here](#). As a reminder, not all E-tags apply to certified long term care facilities. See below for a flyer listing applicable E-tags or download it [here](#).

Emergency Plan

E0001
E0004
E0006
E0007
E0009

Policies & Procedures

E0013 **E0023**
E0015 **E0024**
E0018 **E0025**
E0020 **E0026**
E0022

Communication Plan

E0029 **E0034**
E0030 **E0035**
E0031
E0032
E0033

Training & Testing Program

E0036
E0037
E0039

Emergency Power

E0041
E0042

General Resources

Family/Home Preparedness: www.ready.gov/georgia

Find your Local Emergency Management Agency (EMA):
www.gema.georgia.gov/locations

Find your Local Public Health
District: <https://dph.georgia.gov/about-dph/contact-dph/public->

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Find your Healthcare Coalition (HCC) Region: www.gha911.org

Georgia Health Care Association (GHCA): www.ghca.info/

**Regional Calendar for upcoming events and trainings:
www.gha911.org/coalition-information/**

Georgia's Long Term Care Emergency Preparedness Educational Program is funded through Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Civil Money Penalty (CMP) Funds – Emergency Preparedness in Georgia Certified Nursing Homes, Grant #: 18044G (CMP REQUEST #: 2017-04-GA-1219)

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