



**MARYLAND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS NETWORK**
Helping Maryland's Most Vulnerable

MD EPN NETWORK QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CHANGES AND WINTER WEATHER PREP**

We hope you have had a wonderful holiday season thus far. Thank you for all your life-saving work in 2021! We wish you a Happy New Year!

Our beloved Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association (MNCHA) Executive Director, Mrs. Dawn Seek, retired this month. We are incredibly thankful to Dawn for her years of service as the Executive Director of MNCHA. Dawn's dedication to the home care industry and the exponential growth of MNCHA have been invaluable, and she will be genuinely missed.

We also welcome our new MNCHA Executive Director, Ms. Catlin Houck. Caitlin is a senior healthcare executive and a Registered Nurse who has developed a deep knowledge of home care and community-based services after over a decade of overseeing successful and profitable organizations in the DC Metro region.

Lastly, Maryland's winters are typically unpredictable, but now is the time to prepare for inclement weather. In this issue, we explore winter weather emergency preparedness.

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Helping Maryland's Most Vulnerable



MARYLAND
Department of Health
Office of Preparedness and Response

A MESSAGE FROM FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DAWN SEEK

As we move into the holiday season and towards the end of 2021, it is time to reflect back on the year. I don't think any of us could have predicted encountering the challenges of the last few years.

From my position as Executive Director of MNCHA's Emergency Preparedness Network (EPN), I see an industry stretched to the limit, which continually rises to the task of caring for those they serve. I would like to take a moment to say how proud I am of all of you. I am proud of the home care industry in general, but recently, for its ability to grow and change so quickly during the pandemic and continue to find ways to meet the ever-changing needs of the clients and patients.

EPN has been proud to support and serve you over these last few years, working to do whatever possible to find its member's supplies, education, and legislative leadership and support. We will continue to support the needs of the members.

Through our ongoing relationship with government agencies such as Maryland Medicaid, The MDH Office of Preparedness and Response, the Office of Health Care Quality, the Maryland Health Care Commission, the Maryland Department of Health, CMS Office of Program Operations and Local Engagement, and others, we are able to communicate the needs of the homecare industry and work towards solutions that strengthen the industry's ability to serve its customers.

It is important for our members to communicate with us and let us know about ongoing needs. Sending emails to info@emergencyprepnetwork.org is the easiest way to help us understand your needs. Sending us comments and information on your needs allows us to choose the right topics for webinars, in-person events, and printed materials. We encourage you to attend our free webinars and in-person events. These events are listed on our website and emails out regularly to EPN subscribers.

Finally, I would like to say thank you and farewell. As you may know, I am retiring at the end of the year. It has been an honor and a privilege to work in the homecare industry and to provide emergency preparedness support to the agencies that are so vital to the people of Maryland.

As I have been in the homecare industry in Maryland for over thirty years, I have come to know many of you personally. I have never met a more dedicated group of individuals who have more compassion and drive to serve others. For that, I would like to say thank you. Please keep up the excellent work, the community needs you.

Thank you and I wish you all a happy holiday season.

Dawn Seek
Executive Director, MNCHA



PREPARING FOR WINTER INCLEMENT WEATHER



Is your agency climate resilient? How can you help your clients prepare for winter storms? Although Maryland may not experience frequent tornados like Texas or wide-spread forest fires like California. Maryland has experienced its fair share of storms. Winter storms can also lead to extensive power outages.

Winter is here. Here are a few resources your agency can utilize to better prepare for the Winter storm season:

[1. *The American Red Cross: Winter Preparedness*](#)

Do you know what a Winter Storm Warning and Blizzard Warnings are? Do you know what Immediate precautions you should take or encourage your clients to take? The site also provides information on steps you can take to protect families and their homes. How do you protect your pets and animals in a winter weather emergency? Do you have your emergency kit ready? All these questions are answered on this site. We highly recommend taking the time to review the content on this website.

[2. *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\): Cold Weather Safety*](#)

In the situation that we have an extensive power outage during a weather emergency. What can you do to prevent Hypothermia? What do you do if you find one of your clients has a severe case of frostbite? NOAA's Cold Weather Safety site provides timely information on what to do before, during, and after instances of extreme wintry weather.

[3. *Maryland Department of Transportation: Severe Weather Information \(MDOT\)*](#)

During the winter, traveling from one destination to the next can become a challenge. MDOT's website provides the latest weather-related road conditions, traffic incidents, and events.



[4. Local TV Stations Listing](#)

In the case of an emergency, your Local TV Stations will have local weather conditions and provide listings of local closings. This link provides all the local TV Station' websites in Maryland on one page.

[5. Maryland Emergency Preparedness Network](#)

One of the excellent benefits provided by the MD EPN is Weather Alerts. We receive weather alerts from our funder and partner, the Maryland Department of Health Office of Preparedness & Response (MDH OP&R); in turn, we send these alerts out from the National Weather Service to our community, typically three days or more before weather events. We hope that your agency and your clients can utilize the information to prepare for inclement weather. These alerts are sent via email; please encourage all employees/clients to sign-up for the alert. Did you miss a weather e-blast? No worries, MD EPN Weather alerts are also posted on the MD EPN Homepage, Twitter, and Facebook.

The proceeding information provided are valuable tools to familiarize yourself with, so in the event of a winter storm, the resources you need for your agencies, clients, family, friends, and yourself or at your fingertips. Please share this newsletter with others to encourage them to prepare for inclement weather. As we know, the time to prepare is now.

MD EPN RESOURCES

LANGUAGE ACCESS

Many of our Patient-Provider Guides are now available in Chinese, French, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. You can find them on the MD EPN website under [Patient & Provider Guides and Resources](#).

MDH OP&R RESOURCES

MDH OP&R resource page has a wealth of information including, a dedicated section for [Home Care Patients](#), content on Bioterrorism, Emerging Infectious Diseases, and Weather Preparedness. See [Resources](#) for more details.

COVID CORNER

- MD EPN's COVID Webinars and Resources: [COVID-19 EPN Resource Page](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccinations in Maryland Page](#)
- [Maryland COVID-19 Testing Sites](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Guidance](#)
- [CMS OMH COVID-19 Vaccine Resources for Vulnerable Populations](#)

CONTACT US

Email us at: info@mdemergencyprepnetwork.org

Telephone: 410-793-9031

Website: www.mdemergencyprepnetwork.org

CONTRIBUTORS

Catlin Houck, Executive Director, Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association (MNCHA): chouck@mncha.org

Dawn Seek, Former Executive Director, Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association (MNCHA)

Charmeda McCready, Associate Director, MNCHA Emergency Preparedness: info@mdemergencyprepnetwork.org

Sarah Nagy, Development Officer, Nonprofit Resources US, LLC: info@nonprofitresourcesus.com

Through a partnership between the Maryland-National Capital Home Association (MNCHA) and the Maryland Department of Health Office of Preparedness and Response (MDH OP&R), the Maryland Emergency Preparedness Network (EPN) was created to disseminate free, important, and timely information before, during and after an emergency. The EPN's goal is to build health resilience among one of Maryland's most vulnerable populations, the homebound.