



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

MD EPN NETWORK QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CAITLIN HOUCK

Through the scope of program planning that the Maryland EPN provides, the topics we cover, and the subject matter experts, we provide a plethora of professional growth and personal enrichment. These opportunities for relationship-building instill in me profound gratitude for the fantastic community of dedicated, empathetic professionals with whom we are blessed to connect. We want to extend our sincere thanks to Leighton Jones, ALM, CEM, for thoughtfully leading us through emergency preparedness considerations for the LGBTQ+ community as a part of our 2022 webinar series. If you missed the March webinars, recordings of his presentations are available on the Maryland EPN website.

Maryland EPN continues to focus on compiling disaster preparedness education and resources for vulnerable populations, the disabled, and minority groups because these individuals are disproportionately affected by disasters, often take longer to recover, and have less access to the necessary resources support to do so. Pre-disaster vulnerabilities are multiplied after a disaster or emergency strikes. Leighton underscored this principle while also reinforcing that we must be able to more inclusively plan and respond to disasters to recognize the diversity within our communities.

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Helping Maryland's Most Vulnerable



MARYLAND
Department of Health
Office of Preparedness and Response

There were many valuable action points that Leighton imparted. However, there are two that have continued to resonate with me:

- If your organization does not already have an inclusion statement, consider drafting one and publicizing it.
- Include community gathering spaces and online connection opportunities in your organization's community response & recovery efforts.

Be well and stay safe!

Warmly,
Caitlin



Caitlin Honck

DISASTER RESPONSE FOR THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY



Healthcare Resources for LGBTQIA+

- [Chase Brexton: The Center of Excellence on LGBTQ+ Behavioral Health Equity](#)
- [MD EPN Resource Guide for Providers serving LGBTQIA+](#)



The LGBTQIA+ Community faces unique challenges in having their health care needs met. They have historically faced discrimination by providers and often encountered difficulties accessing appropriate care. This reality is heightened in disaster response. Maryland EPN Network recently welcomed Leighton Jones, the Director of Emergency Response for Direct Relief, to speak with our network on how our organizations can better respond to the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community in the event of a disaster. The 2 part training was held in March 2022. [Disaster Preparedness for the LGBTQ+ Community](#) discussed ways that members of the LGBTQ+ community can be more prepared when a disaster happens and what steps to take now to prepare for a disaster. [Consideration for the LGBTQ+ in Your Organization's/Community's Emergency Planning and Disaster Response](#) discussed factors that emergency planners, service providers and disaster responders should consider to ensure that the LGBTQIA+ community is included in the response after a disaster. Both webinars and accompanying slides are currently available on the [MD EPN Website](#).

TAKEAWAYS FROM THE 2022 PREPAREDNESS SUMMIT

The 2022 Preparedness Summit was held from April 4-7 and represented one of the largest national conferences for emergency preparedness managers and public health professionals. Maryland EPN was grateful to participate again this year and hear industry thought leaders discuss topics across the theme of “Reimagining Preparedness in the Era of COVID-19.” Home health care providers, like public health professionals, sit at a crossroads because, though the pandemic response continues, we must examine how we can advance and evolve individually and as a community.

The Summit suggested several keystones in marking this path forward: community-centered response, transformational leadership, and workforce resilience. Agencies and organizations across the healthcare continuum and public health domain should leverage the momentum gained through partnerships during the COVID-19 response to bolster their community-level response efforts by cultivating interprofessional collaboration, sharing resources, and engaging external partners. Leaders must think and show up differently, as fairness and equity become defining issues for organizations. Automating managerial tasks will create space for leaders to focus on relationship-building with employees. Organizations must also systematically invest in cultivating strong leaders by identifying core competencies needed for the future and reimagining the leadership ranks through internal upskilling and external recruitment. And we all must be mindful and intentional about fostering resilience at a personal level so that it is available to us in our professional roles. Ultimately, we must find ways to practice self-care and renew our energy daily, slow down our “doing” to make more room for thinking and learning, and seek opportunities to express gratitude.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: WEATHER ALERTS

How do you prepare for a weather emergency? Emergency preparedness for weather emergencies involves three stages:

- Make an emergency response plan and familiarize yourself with the most common severe weather risks in your community and the procedures for mitigating the risk to you and your family if catastrophe strikes. MD EPN utilizes resources from the Maryland Department of Health's Office of Preparedness and Response (MDH OP&R), the National Weather Service (NWS), and MEMA (Maryland Emergency Management Agency) to bring you up-to-date weather alerts and alert you when severe weather is approaching your community.
- Utilize the resources below to stay updated on the temperature in your area.
- Ready.Gov Severe Weather - Resources on what to do in different severe weather situations so you can know your risk where you live.

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.

SIGN UP FOR EPN WEATHER ALERTS

Get the most up-to-date weather alerts from the MD Emergency Preparedness Network! MD EPN utilizes resources from the Maryland Department of Health's Office of Preparedness and Response (MDH OP&R), the National Weather Service (NWS) and MEMA (Maryland Emergency Management Agency) to bring you up-to-date weather alerts and alert you when severe weather is approaching. For the most up-to-date information on the weather you can view our [Weather Bulletin](#) directly on the EPN Website.



PUBLIC HEALTH ALERTS

- CMS Issues Additional Guidance on Emergency Preparedness Testing – June 8, 2022” - <https://report.nahc.org/cms-issues-addition-guidance-on-emergency-preparedness-testing/>
- On May 20, 2022, the CDC issued a health alert update related to Monkeypox Virus Infection in the United States – <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2022/han00466.asp>
- Please consider updating your infection control policies.
- If you would like to sign up for direct notifications from the CDC’s Health Alert Network (HAN), click here – <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/index.asp>



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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.