

Title: Sheltering Innovation: Florida's Evolution

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Session: Thursday, June 28, 2006: 10:45-11:45

Abstract: Florida's Approach to Sheltering

Introduction: Ideally the needs for sheltering will become obsolete. However, recent natural events and the threat of emerging infectious diseases indicates that we must be prepared to respond to the health and medical needs of special populations and that sheltering is one option to address these need. The Florida Department of Health and our partners are stakeholders in assuring that we plan, equip, train, exercise and evaluate our system. It is essential that we continue to improve and use every option tool available to us.

Methods: Historically, the Florida Department of Health has been involved in sheltering and responding to the health and medical needs of persons displaced by floods, fires and hurricanes. In order to effectively address and meet the needs of persons with special medical needs, the elderly and persons with disabilities many issues need to be addressed in advance. Policy, infrastructure and operations issues must be addressed in advance. Education, training and exercise of agencies and staff who will participate in an event should be completed well in advance. The use of data and after action reports are essential to be positioned to maintain the health and safety of the fragile populations in our communities.

Purpose: This session will provide an overview of strategies used to address the health and medical needs of individuals who are displaced due to natural or manmade events. The range and scope of needs of clients and their care givers will be described. The importance of planning, facility selection, registries, asset typing of teams and resources, standard operation guidelines, data collection, and discharge planning will be described; as well as lessons learned and how to apply these lessons.