

Region X – Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington

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Wednesday, June 28, 2006 – Topic: **Preparedness**

- 1. List and describe in narrative at least the three most important issues that were addressed during the session.**
 - a. There is a great deal of data available, but no one has access to all of those databases. It would be helpful to consolidate the databases.
 - b. AK SERC can form a subcommittee to address general issues to better define them in emergency response activities.
 - c. There is a need to coordinate access to special needs registries. In AK, a volunteer registry was launched one month ago.
 - d. There is a need to have HIPAA revised to address how information could be shared in case of an emergency. At best, they can try to tailor information (in Excel, Word) to get to the local jurisdictions.
 - e. States would like funding for setting up registries since they do not have enough resources to do so. An alternative was discussed where volunteers could be used to update the registry. Those volunteers can be individuals who are also part of the registry, since they are recipients and are home-bound.
 - f. Outreach is needed – education of individuals with disabilities and special needs populations. Since Idaho does not have many disasters, they are not as concerned about emergency preparedness as they should be. Some individuals are complacent, but can readily share information.
 - g. There is a need to define the term ‘special needs population’ because there is none. Any definition has to do with the context and purpose of the definition so that it does not look like it is labeling anyone. Until you have the definition, you don’t know what you need to plan for. It would also be necessary to discuss in the state, if those larger issues occur in the state, it should be discussed at the regional level, if not Federal level, since funding follows the Federal definition.
- 2. List and describe in narrative at least the three biggest challenges or barriers discussed.**
 - a. The lack of clarification regarding HIPAA and legally what information can be gathered and shared prior to a disaster. There is a concern that states need to figure out how to tailor the information that will be shared with local jurisdictions.
 - b. There are varying sources of data that are scattered. It is important to gather current data, in order to set up registries. There is also a need for

increased resources. It would be helpful to receive funding to set up these registries, since resources are limited.

- 3. List and describe in narrative at least three ‘next steps’ action items identified during the session.**
 - a. Having conference calls is a good way of communicating with each other. Idaho can facilitate quarterly conference calls. They can do similar activities such as similar definitions, since they may use each other to help in a disaster. The closer they mirror each other, the easier it would be to help each other. FEMA or HHS could also help.
- 4. Report on other important issues that were discussed during Working Group.**
 - a. A question was asked concerning registries being considered as assistance or a hindrance. An example was given regarding a fire rescue of those who could not get out on their own as a result of registries. Information is put into an Access database and linked to a GIS map. The notion of a disclaimer (that there is not a 100% guarantee that the person will be reached) was discussed.
 - b. Outreach has been conducted through newspaper articles, attendance at meetings, CATV, churches, radio spots and DME providers. It was stressed that anyone with a disability who could not evacuate the home on their own should be part of the registry.