

Hospital Emergency Management

HVAs, EOPs and NIMS

What does it all mean?

What does The Joint Commission want?



Hospital Accreditation Program
2009 Chapter: Emergency Management

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Joint Commission Requirements for NIMS in Healthcare

Standard EM.01.01.01 requires the organization to plan prior to developing its written Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). That may sound obvious, but it is certainly not simple for at least two reasons: first, good planning is harder than it sounds, and requires a great deal of experience and imagination. Second, The Joint Commission lays out a number of very specific points to be addressed, each of which must be customized for your site.

The Commission's approach begins with a detailed Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (HVA) to determine threats and risks to the facility and the vulnerability to them. Hospital leaders, including medical staff should participate, and as a group define and prioritize potential emergencies and communicate needs to community response agencies.

The HVA is used to define preparedness activities, including the hospital incident command structure. A Presidential Directive established the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as the "common language" for coordinated multi-agency responses for all Federal, state and local responders, including healthcare.

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Joint Commission Requirements for NIMS in Healthcare

Hospitals are required to implement 17 specific NIMS activities ranging from formal adoption to updated EOPs to mutual aid agreements, training and multi-agency exercises. Coordination, planning and communication are key elements.

TJC specifies certain FEMA courses (IS-700, IS-800, ICS 100 and ICS 200), with the intended role of the responder dictating the type and depth of training required. Trainers should have demonstrated experience as an Incident Commander in a NIMS environment. IESO recommends including multiple emergency response case studies in which the primary instructor was the Incident Commander. At the end of each four-hour FEMA module, students need to be able to logon to the FEMA website and take the final exam.

HICS (Healthcare Incident Command System) training alone does NOT meet the NIMS requirements, but can supplement the program. HICS incorporates standard Incident Command System (ICS) principles, but with modifications for healthcare.

IESO recommends "NIMS for Executives" for healthcare executives who need a working "awareness" of NIMS and their correct role in an event as facilitators.



Health Care Services

- OSHA 30 and 10-hr Courses for Healthcare
- NIMS for Healthcare Executives
- Patient Handling Ergonomics
- Industrial Hygiene
- HICS and Mass Casualty Plans
- Exposure Control Plans
- ISO 14001 for Healthcare
- OHSAS 18001 for Healthcare
- TJC/DNV Program Elements

Insist on Real NIMS Experience



Our NIMS expert, Dr. Scott Harris, is a former On-Scene Coordinator and NIMS instructor for the U.S. EPA. He was the Region 6 lead for BioWatch, a national sentry program for early detection of biological WMD events, and served on national workgroups developing BMPs and Agency capabilities for surveillance, first response, hotzone sampling and decontamination.

Scott authored Response, Decontamination and Consequence Management Plans for numerous major cities, and international airports, and was a member of the Region 6 Emergency Readiness Team, holding DOD Top Secret and DOE "Q" security clearances.