

# Presenters



**Scott Zylstra** is a graduate of the University of Northern Iowa and has over 20 years of experience working in volunteer areas such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Iowa and MD Anderson Cancer Center Volunteer Services and Merchandising in Houston Texas where he managed volunteer and volunteer programs for seven years before shifting to his current Data Base Coordinator role.

Scott's volunteer and analytical experience helps structure data collection with a focus on departmental process improvement and outcomes. Scott reviews and advises the departments performance to ensure it meets with The Joint Commission standards. During the COVID pandemic he developed reporting and data collection streams to provide ongoing compliance information for the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN). Scott continues to assist in the comprehensive required annual volunteer online training.

**Todd McMullin** graduated in non-profit management and has 25 years experience as a technology consultant for community organizations. He was the National Director for the Disaster Help Network (DHN) from 2003-2008 in collaboration with SAIC Corporation. In 2008 DHN's software was managing more than 60% of the Medical Reserve Corps volunteers across the USA. Todd was directly involved in multiple disaster responses including all 4 hurricane in Florida & Alabama in 2004. In 2005 he deployed the first cross-state medical disaster volunteer system (between Florida & Alabama for Hurricane Katrina).



# VSys Voices: Planning for Emergencies



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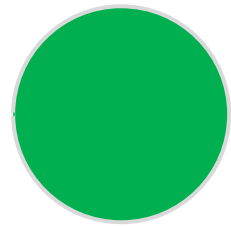
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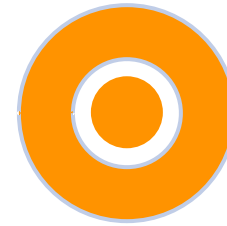
# Target audience for today's webinar

## SKILL LEVEL



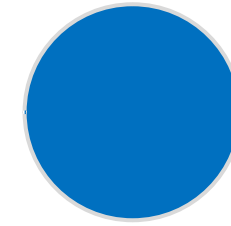
### Minimal Knowledge

Looking for some basic information, key principles and “how-to’s” on the subject.



### Working Knowledge

Integrated practices and moving beyond basic concepts. Looking for breadth and depth on a topic



### Authoritative Knowledge

Looking for advanced knowledge, integration and concepts that are innovative and cutting edge.



# By the end of today's session, you will be able to:

1. Understand disaster planning at national and local levels
2. Compare your plans & processes to MD Andersons
3. Identify next steps for your organization.



# Results from Pre-registration Poll

**Does your volunteer program interface with disaster planning?**

Yes: 43%      No: 4%      Not sure: 52%

**Are you familiar with the National Response Plan (or Framework)?**

Very familiar: 4%      Slightly familiar: 61%      Never heard of it: 35%

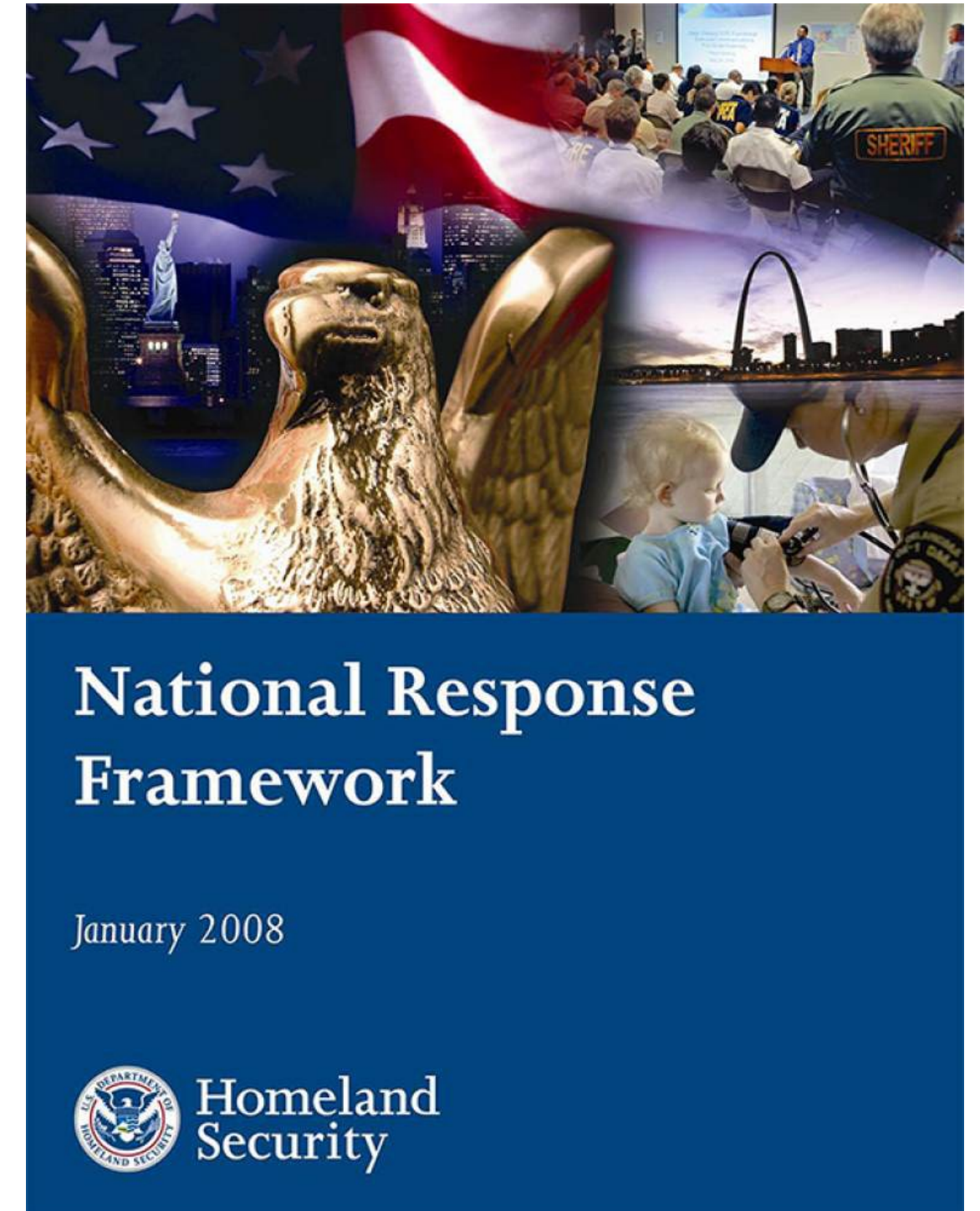
**Have you developed relationships with local NGOs that support disaster relief?**

Yes: 4%      No: 47%      No Idea: 47%



# National Response Vocabulary

- [National Response Framework \(NRF\)](#) = **Structure**
  - [NRF Appendix on Volunteerism](#)
- [National Incident Management System \(NIMS\)](#) = **By whom**
- Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) = **Tactical Stuff**
  - [ESF #6: Mass Care, Housing, Human Services, Medical](#)
- Emergency Operations Center (EOC) = **Where**

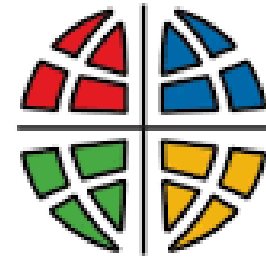




# Disaster Response: Partner Organizations



National  
Voluntary Organizations  
Active in Disaster



Lutheran  
Disaster Response



**AmeriCorps**



**American  
Red Cross**



THE CHURCH OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS





# Disaster Response: MRC

- 800 Units Nationwide
- 300K Volunteers
- 3M Hours of COVID Support

*medical  
reserve  
corps*

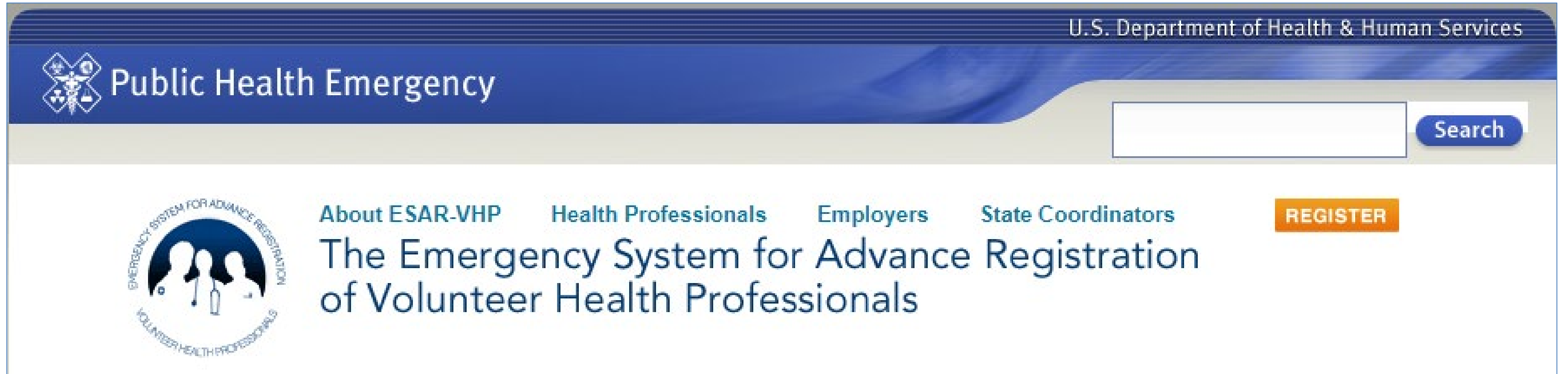


## MRC Activities

Examples of activities that MRC volunteers participate in and support include the following:

- Emergency preparedness and response trainings and exercises
- Emergency shelter operations and medical care
- Disaster medical and behavioral health support
- Medical facility surge support
- Mass dispensing efforts (e.g., medication, water, other supplies)
- Disease testing and surveillance
- Community vaccination clinics
- Veterinary care
- Support services to disaster call centers, family assistance centers, and reception/evacuation centers
- Emergency operations center and communications support
- Patient movement support
- Search and rescue operations
- Disaster clean-up and recovery support
- First aid and medical support during large public gatherings
- Community education and outreach
- Emergency preparedness and response planning, logistical, and administrative support
- And more...

# ESAR-VHP



The screenshot shows the top portion of the ESAR-VHP website. At the top right, it says "U.S. Department of Health & Human Services". Below that is a blue banner with the "Public Health Emergency" logo and text. To the right of the banner is a search bar with a "Search" button. Below the banner, there is a circular logo for the "EMERGENCY SYSTEM FOR ADVANCE REGISTRATION OF VOLUNTEER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS". To the right of the logo are navigation links: "About ESAR-VHP", "Health Professionals", "Employers", and "State Coordinators". Further right is an orange "REGISTER" button. The main heading reads "The Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals".

- Federal Program
- Interstate Credentialing of Medical Professionals
- Accessible through your state department of health
- Provides pre-vetted medical and non-medical volunteers to hospitals
- Designed to work alongside existing hospital volunteers + MRC





# MD Anderson Profile

- Seven Houston locations with hospital partnerships in several states.
- 750+ patient beds
- 300+ volunteers
- MD Anderson has been named No. 1 in cancer care in U.S. News & World Report's 2024-2025 annual “Best Hospitals”





# Department concerns

- 1. Communication:** How could the department ensure that volunteers still felt connected to Volunteer Services and Merchandising during the pandemic?
- 2. Information:** How could the department keep volunteers updated on our response to the COVID-19 pandemic?
- 3. Compliance:** How would the department track vaccination compliance with the current volunteer population?
- 4. Return:** How would the department structure the safe return of volunteers and track vaccine compliance?





# Answers: Communication

- **Communicated** weekly emails via VSys One Letter Manager
- **Held** volunteer virtual Town Halls to share news and updates about how the COVID-19 will affect volunteering and possible next steps
- **Invited** volunteers to share and post what activities they were doing during the pandemic via the Volunteer Services Facebook page



# Answers: Communication

- . **Informed** volunteers that they can still make a difference in our patients lives by safely donating blood at donation centers
- . **Encouraged** volunteers to send words of hope to cancer survivors to our department email which would then be turned into a video and shared with all cancer survivors, caregivers, and family members via our social media outlets
- . **Surveyed** volunteers on their interest in returning



# Answers: Information

- **Shared** the MD Anderson COVID-19 resource page to provide fact-based information to volunteers
- **Provided** a calendar of virtual events and classes volunteers can attend that teach them how to better support our cancer patients
- **Created** art classes that volunteers can attend virtually





# Answers: Information

**Communicated** the process for volunteers to receive COVID-19 vaccines at MD Anderson with a clear definition of "fully vaccinated":



- **Ensured** volunteers vaccination status met CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) and NHSN (National Healthcare Safety Network) standards
- **Created** certifications in VSys One to track volunteers COVID-19 vaccine compliance per the above definition
- **Used** VSys One Intellilists to filter volunteer vaccine compliance
- **Created** vaccine compliance reports for CMS and HNSN



# Answers: Return to Service

- **Created** an onboarding process for returning volunteers that included:
  - Proof of complete COVID-19 vaccination
  - Two shots of an approved vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer) or one shot (Janssen)
  - Required a photo of COVID-19 vaccine card
  - Current flu shot record



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# Answers: Return to Service

- Schedule would be implemented: small groups of volunteers at first then more as CMS and HNSN allowed
- Moved ongoing training and interviews to Zoom with plans to use the VSys Online Training Module in the future



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# Our Timeline

- . March 13, 2020: Informed volunteers that the department would be closed due to the pandemic
- . April 4, 2020: Weekly email communication begins
- . August 9, 2021: Virtual Volunteer Town Hall
- . October 21, 2021: Informed volunteers of the onboarding process and steps
- . February 10, 2022: COVID-19 documentation deadline
- . February 22, 2022: Reorientation begins
- . March 14, 2022: Phase I and II volunteers must complete all onboarding requirements
- . March 21, 2022: First volunteers return to campus



# Outcomes

COVID-19 forced a reimagining of our volunteering practices; emphasizing flexibility and creative solutions to continue making a positive impact on our patient, family, and caregiver population.





# Ideas To Action

1. Obtain / Maintain compliance with Joint Commission Multi-hazard plans, including cyberattack.
2. Develop Volunteer Disaster Recovery Plan and policies, then educate volunteers on them.
3. Connect with local volunteer support groups like Medical Reserve Corps and faith-based.



# Resources

- Joint Commission (2021). [R3 Report](#): Requirement, Rationale, Reference.
- Joint Commission (2023, August 15). [Sentinel Event Alert: Preserving Patient Safety after a cyberattack](#).
- Deloitte & Joint Commission (2020) COVID-19 [Lessons Learned: A Resource for Recovery. September 18, 2020](#)
- [National Response Framework](#)
  - [NRF Appendix on Volunteerism](#)
- [National Incident Management System](#)





# Open Discussion & Questions





# Thank you for joining us!

For Questions contact Todd @  
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(518) 407-3134

