



King County Healthcare Coalition

Opioid Substitution Programs Earthquake Tabletop *January 30, 2009*

After Action Report & Improvement Plan

Executive Summary

The King County Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) Earthquake Tabletop Exercise was held on January 30, 2009. The exercise was sponsored by Public Health – Seattle & King County. Located in Seattle at Chinook Building, the exercise lasted 1.5 hours.

The focus of the tabletop exercise was to practice preparedness and response activities using the scenario of a large-sized earthquake in the Puget Sound region. The exercise was designed and facilitated to promote informal discussion, identify issues requiring further work, and a free exchange of ideas among representatives from participating opioid treatment programs and key stakeholders from city, county, state, and federal agencies.

Overview

Players in this tabletop exercise were presented with a 6.8 magnitude earthquake with four Situation Updates that simulated the progression of events over a two-day period. To drive the exercise objectives Players were presented with a message about the specific situation at various OTPs after each Situation Update. Players were then presented with questions to instigate their response to that specific message.

Participating Organizations: Therapeutic Health Services
Veterans Administration
Evergreen Treatment Services
Public Health Seattle-King County
King County Healthcare Coalition
City of Seattle Office of Emergency Management
Washington State Board of Pharmacy
Washington State Department of Alcohol & Substance Abuse
University of California – Los Angeles
Drug Enforcement Administration

Exercise Objectives

1. Determine ability to support timely decisions regarding operations of the Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) in an emergency.
2. Demonstrate ability to coordinate communication and resources among key stakeholders.
3. Evaluate process for activating and implementing mutual aid between OTP providers.
4. Discuss protocols and rules of regulatory agencies

Timeline and Major Events

- **Friday, May 29 – 7:59 AM:** A very large earthquake occurred at 0759, rumbling through the entire Puget Sound Region for 2 minutes
 - Damage is visible in all areas of the County.
 - All phones (landlines and cellular) are jammed.
 - Electricity is out in the SODO region, Capital Hill and First Hill.
- **Friday, May 29 – 8:45 AM:** Media reports a shallow 6.8 magnitude earthquake occurred in the Black Diamond area. Media helicopters report extensive damage in Kent, Auburn & Renton.
 - The 520 bridge has collapsed.
 - The Alaskan Way viaduct is closed
- **Saturday, May 30:** Phones: Cell phone and land lines are working sporadically. Text messages are getting through. Limited power returns to SODO neighborhood. ETS has power, but no water.
- **Monday, June 1:** A Presidential disaster declaration has been signed.
- **Monday, July 6:** There have been several moderate aftershocks (2-5 in magnitude) since May 29th.

Lessons Learned and Outcomes Based on Objectives

1. Determine the ability of Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) to support timely decisions regarding operations in an emergency.

- OTPs who have a generator will assess what equipment, including alarms, are powered by their agency's back-up generator.
- OTPs will advise staff that they should plan alternative routes to get to work in case their normal route is closed as a result of a disaster.
- VA will identify staff that will make decisions in the event of a disaster and develop a memo to patients to inform them that they are working on a disaster plan.

2. Demonstrate the ability of OTPs to coordinate communication and resources among key stakeholders.

- OTPs will work on strategies for communicating with staff, with patients, and with the general public, including the media, in the event of a disaster. This includes developing communication strategies for contacting patients if power is down and telephones (both landlines and cell phones) are jammed.
 - a) Strategies include encouraging staff to have an out-of-area phone contact
- OTPs will work on developing strategies for communicating with each other regarding their ongoing activities in a disaster.
- Will test WATrac Incident Management System by uploading information in different file formats within the Command Center feature.
- OTPs that anticipate a need for enhanced services in a disaster (e.g., heightened security, priority in restoring power, transportation considerations) should contact their local Emergency Operations Center well in advance and explain their issues and the dynamics of the problem to someone there, preferably someone at least at the level of Captain.

- a) Public Health Seattle-King County and the King County Healthcare Coalition will organize a meeting with OTP providers and a member of the emergency management department from the cities the OTPs are located.

3. *Evaluate the process for activating and implementing mutual aid between OTPs.*

- A third OTPs signed the Memorandum of Agreement at the tabletop. Though not able to become a signatory at this time, two OTP providers are supportive of the MOA.
 - a) In an emergency it may be necessary to coordinate with OTPs outside of King County. Although nothing is currently in place to enable that process, the use of the existing MOA as a template for working with OTP providers in other counties is encouraged.
 - b) A State level entity would be most appropriate to take the lead in facilitating emergency preparedness activities among OTPs across Washington State.

4. *Discuss the protocols and rules of regulatory agencies in an emergency.*

- In attempting to balance the needs of client access to medication, clients and staff's physical safety, security of medication, and provider's liability exposure, OTPs feel they need support from regulatory authorities.
- DASA wants to provide a supportive climate to OTPs in a disaster.
- DEA wants OTPs to keep them advised of their activities in the event of a disaster. DEA will provide OTPs with a contact telephone number to call. While it wants to be kept informed, DEA does not want to stand in the way.
- Further work is needed to develop a disaster plan for dosing methadone patients in the King County Jail in the event that a licensed OTP is unable to do so.

5. *Other items:*

- Further work is needed to verify if general population shelter operators will allow shelterees to bring in take-home doses of methadone into the shelter, even when prescription can be verified.
- Work needs to be done to develop a medically-based disaster plan to address chronic inebriate and/or opiate abusing citizens who are suddenly cut off from their drug due to disaster.

Improvement Plan

	Actions to be Taken	Responsible Parties	Estimated Completion Date	Status
1	OTPs that have a generator will assess what equipment, including alarms, are powered by their agency's back-up generator.	Ron Jackson, Evergreen Treatment Services	February 15, 2009	
4	OTPs will develop strategies for communicating with staff, patients, and the general public, in the event of a disaster. This includes developing communication strategies for contacting patients if power is down and telephones (both landlines and cell phones) are jammed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies include encouraging staff to have an out-of-area phone contact 	King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Division Public Health Seattle-King County	June 1, 2009	
5	Will test Command Center feature of WATrac	Michelle McD. & Allison Schletzbaum (WATrac program manager)	June 30, 2009	
6	PHSKC and the King County Healthcare Coalition will assist with organizing a meeting for OTP providers to network with local emergency management partners. The goal of the meeting is to provide a foundational understanding of each others roles and needs during an emergency. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	Michelle McD.	May 30, 2009	
7	Verify if general population shelter operators will allow shelterees to bring in take-home doses of methadone into the shelter, even when prescription can be verified.	Michelle McD.	COMPLETE	
8	OTPs will receive further training on how to make a request for medical & non-medical resource assistance during a disaster, what information to include in a request, and the appropriate channels for submitting a request.	Michelle McD.	August, 2009	
9	Develop treatment protocols and service delivery agreements with Jail Health regarding dosing during a lockdown event.	Therapeutic Health Services (Patricia)	May 31, 2009	