The Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

The Philadelphia MRC is a group of public health, medical and other volunteers who are ready to serve Philadelphia during a public health emergency or other time of need. Volunteers are pre-identified, pre-trained and pre-credentialed to be ready to respond when an emergency happens.

Philadelphia MRC volunteers supplement existing emergency, medical, public health and behavioral health resources, which may become overwhelmed during a disaster. The Philadelphia MRC is part of a collaborative effort to help Philadelphia be more prepared for public health crises.

What does a Philadelphia MRC volunteer do?

During an emergency, Philadelphia MRC volunteers may be called to:

- conduct medical screening or evaluation
- give vaccine or medicine at Points of Dispensing (PODs) / medication centers
- provide health education through community outreach or answering questions at a hotline call center
- provide behavioral health support
- help provide mass patient care in shelters, clinics or hospitals

Volunteers may be asked to respond during large and small-scale emergencies, such as an influenza pandemic, a severe storm that requires the City to open mass shelters or other event that overwhelms community resources.

During an emergency, every effort will be made to match the roles of volunteers with their professional skills and licensure. Also, the Philadelphia MRC will provide all volunteers with medication, vaccine or equipment to protect themselves.

A few times a year, MRC volunteers may also be invited to participate in vaccination clinics or emergency preparedness drills and exercises. Additional training opportunities are also available.

Who should volunteer?

A large-scale public health emergency would require the help of thousands of health professionals. The Philadelphia MRC needs people who have medical, public health, behavioral health or other skills, such as:

- licensed, certified or retired health professionals including physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, pharmacists, behavioral health providers, EMTs, paramedics, dentists, veterinarians and respiratory care therapists
- medical, nursing, pharmacy, public health and other allied health professional students
- non-medical personnel to fill key support positions, such as interpreters, chaplains and administrative professionals

“In a major emergency, the public health community will need all of the help they can get.” - Dr. Caroline Johnson, Director, Division of Disease Control, Philadelphia Department of Public Health

Enroll today. Be ready for tomorrow.
How does the Philadelphia MRC prepare volunteers?

Volunteers get:

- training in emergency preparedness and response
  Volunteers are asked to participate in one required and several optional trainings each year. Philadelphia MRC trainings are a perfect opportunity to earn continuing education credits. For a list of current offerings, visit www.phila.gov/mrc.
- opportunities to assist at vaccine clinics
- opportunities to participate in preparedness drills and exercises

Four reasons to volunteer with the Philadelphia MRC:

1. Make a difference.
   After disasters like Hurricane Katrina or 9/11, many people want to help out. MRC volunteers are enrolled and trained before an emergency happens, so you can give help as soon as it is needed. Being part of an organized cadre of volunteers means you will have the greatest potential to make an impact.

2. Use your skills and expertise in a helpful way.
   If you are a health professional or have a background in health, there will be an opportunity for you to help out. All types of skills are needed; the MRC will help you apply your skills where they are needed most. Because MRC volunteers are trained in advance, they are better prepared to help themselves and others during an emergency.

3. Stay connected.
   Not only will MRC volunteers be among the first who are notified when an emergency happens, they also receive a quarterly newsletter and are offered special training in advance of emergencies. Stay up-to-date by learning about public health preparedness, terrorism threats, emerging diseases, pandemic influenza and other important topics. Plus, MRC trainings are an opportunity to earn continuing education credits and meet other people who have experience and insight in public health preparedness.

4. Know you’re covered.
   When an emergency happens, people with medical training are often among the first who want to help out. MRC volunteers are pre-identified, pre-trained and pre-credentialed, so there is no delay in getting expert help where it is needed most. Volunteers working with the MRC are covered by liability protection and compensation for accidental injury.

Enroll today. Be ready for tomorrow.

Three ways to sign up or learn more:

- Go online
  www.phila.gov/mrc
- Contact us
  Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps
  Philadelphia Department of Public Health
  500 South Broad Street, 2nd Floor
  Philadelphia, PA 19146
  Phone: 215-685-6861
  Fax: 215-545-8362
  E-mail: mrc@phila.gov
- Attend a training
  Visit www.phila.gov/mrc for a current list of trainings.

“You’ll receive more than you give and in the process you’re helping our community become better prepared.” —Dr. Kent Bream, member of the Philadelphia MRC