



# MRC MINUTE

## Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps Newsletter



Volume 1, Issue 3 May, 2008

Philadelphia Department  
of Public Health  
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## Letter from the Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator

Dear Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer,

At the national level, the tagline of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) program is: "Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy and Prepared Communities." Keeping that in mind, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few of the 2008 goals of the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps program.

The Philadelphia MRC volunteers are an integral part of Philadelphia's emergency preparedness planning and response efforts and we continue to seek out new members and build the corps. Current members are our best source resource for engaging new volunteers. Please continue to forward information about the Philadelphia MRC program to your colleagues.

Education is one of the best methods to prepare for disasters. Our MRC training courses and educational seminars are specifically tailored for you, our volunteers. In the past year, members have participated in National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) training, Medication Center / Point of Dispensing (POD) walk-through training and a Pandemic Influenza seminar. On Wednesday, March 26, 2008, thirty-four volunteers participated in a Weapons of Mass Destruction presentation. In the upcoming months we have planned a Medication Center / Point of Dispensing (POD) Leadership training and a Psychological First Aid seminar. For more details, please see the Upcoming MRC Events section on pages 3 and 4 of this newsletter. Suggestions for future topics are always welcome.

In addition, the printing of Philadelphia MRC volunteer identification badges is underway. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this process. Badges will be mailed upon completion.

Have a safe and healthy spring season.

Warmest regards,  
Marie Carbonetto, R.Ph., MRC Coordinator

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# Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps Membership Campaign



Does your workplace have a newsletter or publication? Are you a member of a local professional organization? If so, you can help us bring in new members for the MRC.

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health is planning a Philadelphia MRC recruitment campaign. Adding more members to our MRC will make us more prepared and better equipped to respond to emergencies.

The goal of the campaign is to recruit new members in the MRC program. We'll need your help to reach that goal. Please tell us about professional organizations, newsletters or publications for health professionals or people with a

background in health. Using these resources, we hope to reach many new members. Please send any information to Marie Carbonetto at 215-685-6861 or [marie.carbonetto@phila.gov](mailto:marie.carbonetto@phila.gov).

## Philadelphia Department of Public Health releases "Health Bulletin"

In January, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health released the first issue of the "Health Bulletin" to community-based organizations and health service providers in Philadelphia. This newsletter is intended to provide health information to the general public four times a year, and may be used during a disease outbreak or other public health emergency. The first issue featured topics such as MRSA, flu shots and emergency preparedness.

The "Health Bulletin" is available in eight languages (English, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Traditional Chinese, Khmère, Ukrainian and Portuguese). Large print is also produced. Braille is available upon request.

All versions of the bulletin are available at [http://www.phila.gov/health/units/ddc/The\\_Health\\_Bulletin.html](http://www.phila.gov/health/units/ddc/The_Health_Bulletin.html). If you would like to be added to our mailing list to receive the "Health Bulletin" via email, please contact Deborah Knorr at 215-685-6459 or [deborah.knorr@phila.gov](mailto:deborah.knorr@phila.gov).

**MRSA: What is it?**

You may have heard about MRSA on the news, from your child's school or from people you know. So what is MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*)? It is a type of skin infection that is caused by bacteria (a germ). This bacteria is resistant to certain antibiotics—that means only some medicines will kill this type of germ.

If someone gets a skin infection caused by MRSA, they may have a wound on the skin. It may be red, swollen, painful, or have pus or draining fluid. It may look like an insect or spider bite.

MRSA is spread from a person with an infection by:

1. Direct contact with infected skin.
2. Sharing contaminated sports equipment.
3. Sharing personal items (bar soap, deodorant, towels, razors).

If you think you have a MRSA skin infection, seek medical care. Only a doctor or healthcare worker can tell if you have MRSA. To treat the infection, the doctor may drain the wound, give you an antibiotic, or tell you how to care for the wound.

Protect yourself from MRSA and other germs by doing these things:

- Wash your hands often with warm, soapy water.
- Use an alcohol-based hand gel when soap and water are not on hand.
- Do not share personal items (like bar soap, deodorant, towels, razors) or clothing.
- If you have a cut, scrape or a scratch, keep it clean, dry and covered. Tape your bandage on all four sides.
- Do not take antibiotics when you do not need them.
- If a doctor tells you to take antibiotics, be sure to take all of the medicine.

**Remember:**

- Only a doctor or healthcare worker can tell you if you have MRSA.
- Protect yourself: Wash your hands often.
- Don't spread germs by sharing personal items (like bar soap, deodorant, towels, razors).

## Upcoming Philadelphia MRC Volunteer Seminars

May 2008						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### Medication Center / Point of Dispensing (POD) Leadership Training

Saturday, May 3, 2008

8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

University of the Sciences in Philadelphia (USP)

Athletic/Recreation Center (ARC)

43<sup>rd</sup> and Woodland Ave

Philadelphia, PA 19104

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) has developed a Public Health Emergency Response Plan. A major component of this plan describes how oral antibiotics or vaccinations will be provided to the City's population within 48 hours of an emergency incident, such as an act of terrorism. In the worst case scenario, the Public Health Emergency Response Plan calls for 40 medication centers / points of dispensing (PODs) to operate simultaneously throughout the City. PDPH is currently training its own staff, partners and volunteers to set-up and manage medication centers / points of dispensing. In order to efficiently manage each medication center, the Health Department has identified five key leadership roles: POD Manager, POD Assistant Manager, Operations Lead (medical), Logistics Lead (non-medical), and Line Lead. The medication center / POD leadership training is designed so that all trainees would be comfortable in any of the POD leadership roles and be prepared to set-up and manage a medication center during a public health emergency

Target audience: Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps volunteers interested in advanced training for a Medication Center or POD leadership role.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Free parking is available on site.

Registration for this training is limited to 35 people. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Marie Carbonetto at 215-685-6861 or [marie.carbonetto@phila.gov](mailto:marie.carbonetto@phila.gov).



## Upcoming Philadelphia MRC Volunteer Seminars

### Psychological First Aid (PFA)

Thursday, May 15, 2008

6 – 8 p.m.

Philadelphia Department of Public Health

1<sup>st</sup> floor auditorium

500 S. Broad Street

Philadelphia, PA 19146

Psychological First Aid is a supportive behavioral intervention for use in the immediate aftermath of disaster and terrorism. Psychological First Aid is designed to reduce the initial distress caused by traumatic events, and to foster short- and long-term adaptive functioning. Psychological First Aid is different from psychotherapy and mental health treatment.

Psychological First Aid is intended for the first 0 - 48 hours after a disaster or crisis event. Philadelphia MRC members may be called upon to provide PFA in medication dispensing centers, special needs shelters, medical triage areas, acute care facilities (e.g., emergency departments), or while staffing health education hotlines.

**Speaker: Steven M. Crimando, MA, BCETS**, is a clinician and educator specialized in crisis management, disaster recovery and traumatic stress response. Mr. Crimando is a Board Certified Expert in Traumatic Stress and a Diplomate of the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress. He serves as a consultant and trainer for the U.S. Department of Justice, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the United Nations.

Target audience: All Philadelphia MRC members and those interested in learning more.

A light dinner will be provided. Free parking is available in the lot adjacent to the building.

This program will offer 2.0 contact hours of medical and nursing continuing education credits.

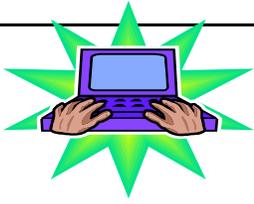
Please RSVP to Marie Carbonetto at 215-685-6861 or [marie.carbonetto@phila.gov](mailto:marie.carbonetto@phila.gov)

## Upcoming Emergency Preparedness Volunteer Opportunity

### Bucks County Department of Health

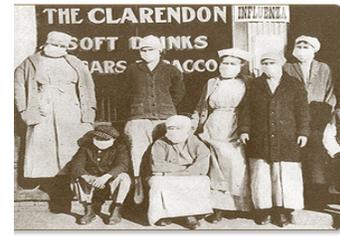
### Point of Dispensing (POD) Exercise

The Bucks County Department of Health is planning to hold a Point of Dispensing (POD) exercise on Saturday, June 7, 2008. Volunteers are invited to participate to fill various roles in the mass medication dispensing exercise. The scenario will be an aerosolized bioterrorism event such as anthrax, plague, or tularemia. For more information please contact Jennifer Lamothe at (267) 880-5306 or by e-mail at [jelamothe@co.bucks.pa.us](mailto:jelamothe@co.bucks.pa.us)



## Website of Interest

**1918.pandemicflu.gov The Great Pandemic.** Historical information about the 1917-1918 Flu Pandemic, including a snapshot of life in 1918 and a summary of events for every state.



PandemicFlu.gov

National Library of Medicine, via The Office of the Public Health Service Historian

## Philadelphia MRC Volunteer Network

**WANT TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER?**  
Click here to apply

**EXISTING VOLUNTEER**

Username

Password

**Welcome to the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer Alert Network**

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) has established the Philadelphia MRC Volunteer Alert Network to send notifications and emergency alerts to Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps volunteers. It is also the method for volunteers to complete the online Philadelphia MRC application. This network relies on software that can issue text messages, voice messages and e-mail to

Has your contact information changed? Remember to update your volunteer profile at <http://mrcalert.phila.gov>. Please make sure that all of your contact information is up-to-date. E-mail [mrc@phila.gov](mailto:mrc@phila.gov) with any questions.

Are you receiving this newsletter but have yet to sign up for the Philadelphia MRC? Or do you know a colleague who might be interested in

joining? Visit <http://www.phila.gov/mrc> for more information.

## State Emergency Registry of Volunteers in Pennsylvania (SERVPA)

After the events of 9/11 and the anthrax attacks, the U.S. Congress recognized the need to make optimum use of volunteer health personnel in an emergency and authorized the development of an Emergency System for Advance Registration of Health Professions Volunteers (**ESAR-VHP**). This network of state-based volunteer registries includes readily available, verifiable, up-to-date information regarding the volunteer's identity, licensing, and credentialing. **SERVPA** ([www.serv.pa.gov](http://www.serv.pa.gov)) is Pennsylvania's deployment of ESAR-VHP.

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) and the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) are working together to determine how Philadelphia MRC program and the SERVPA program will coordinate volunteer resources during a statewide or national emergency response.

For more information visit [www.serv.pa.gov](http://www.serv.pa.gov).