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Reopening Shuttered Hospitals to Expand Surge Capacity

**Bioterrorism and Other Public Health Emergencies
Tools and Models for Planning and Preparedness**

A new resource can help public health officials and hospital and health facility staff determine how to best choose and use a formerly closed hospital or health facility to care for patients in advance of natural or man-made disasters.

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Background

Reopening Shuttered Hospitals to Expand Surge Capacity, a new report from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), offers some important, timely information to prepare emergency responders and public health officials for disasters. The report includes the Surge Toolkit and Facilities Checklist for planning and site inspection.

Among the issues covered in the report and the Surge Toolkit and Facilities Checklist:

Facility Structure and Status

- How long has the facility been closed? Does it have adequate structural integrity?
- Does the facility have functioning plumbing, electricity, hot water, and HVAC?
- Does the facility have bulk and portable medical gas supplies? Fire safety equipment supplies?

Equipment and Supplies

- How will biomedical equipment, pharmacy, and dietary services be provided?
- Are disposable medical equipment and supplies available?

Staffing

- What Federal, State, local, and non-government resources will be used to cover staffing?
- Are there mutual aid agreements with surrounding area hospitals?
- What staff skill mix is needed? In which medical specialty areas?
- How will volunteers be used?

Public Transport

- Does the local transit authority have preexisting agreements with local firms to provide buses and wheelchair vans?
- Are private ambulance services available?

Security

- Is a radio communications vendor available? Are satellite phones available and working?
- Are there area contractors who can install temporary chain link fences, jersey barriers, etc?
- How will police and military personnel be used?

These topics and many more are covered in this report, which was prepared under contract to AHRQ by Abt Associates Inc.

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Reopening Shuttered Hospitals to Expand Surge Capacity

The full report and the Surge Toolkit and Facilities Checklist are available as PDF files. Your browser may support downloading these files from this page by using the links below. Right click on the link and then select "Save Target As" (Internet Explorer) or "Save Link As" (Firefox® or Netscape®).

- [Full Report—Reopening Shuttered Hospitals to Expand Surge Capacity](#) ([PDF File](#), 1.6 MB). [PDF Help](#).
- [Surge Toolkit and Facility Checklist](#) ([PDF File](#), 525 KB). [PDF Help](#).

More Information

If you have any questions about AHRQ's bioterrorism and health system preparedness program, contact:

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