



KING COUNTY  
Healthcare  
Coalition

Prepare. Respond. Recover.



annual report 2007



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Healthcare  
Coalition

Prepare. Respond. Recover.

### **Our Vision**

**A coordinated response across the continuum of healthcare that meets the health and medical needs of the community during an emergency.**

*The Healthcare Coalition is a voluntary organization that is open to all organizations that provide healthcare services in King County. Membership includes hospitals, long term care, safety net clinics, home health, mental health, ambulatory care, home care, pediatric, and other specialty providers.*

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## Health Director's Letter

*"We have important work ahead to build the capacities for a prepared health care system."*

Dear Colleagues,

In its short history, the King County Healthcare Coalition has made its presence felt as a catalyst for improvement in our region's preparedness.

It was almost two years ago when King County Executive Ron Sims and Public Health –Seattle & King County first came to leaders in the health care community with an invitation and a challenge to strengthen our community's ability to respond to a major disaster.

Our health care system partners responded with the cooperation, energy and focus for which our region is known. Today, the Healthcare Coalition has set the standard for national collaboration and planning for health care system disaster response, bringing together partners across the continuum of care, from ambulatory to inpatient to long-term care.

The importance of this work in protecting the public's health is clear.

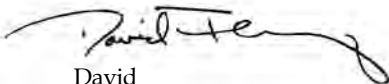
We've seen tragic consequences of a health care system that is not ready to respond and isn't coordinated. Hurricane Katrina is still fresh in our minds as an example of how a health system can collapse in a catastrophic event, with devastating consequences for our community's health.

We've taken this lesson to heart, and our community's leaders have risen to the challenge. King County Executive Ron Sims and the King County Council have contributed resources that have supported our early efforts. Working together, we have made important advancements: new alternate care facilities have been identified that will be critical to meet the surge capacity needs of catastrophic events, the Regional Medical Resource Center has been established to improve communications and coordination among our system partners, and we were recently named as one of eleven Healthcare Coalition communities in the country that have been recognized and funded to expand our work.

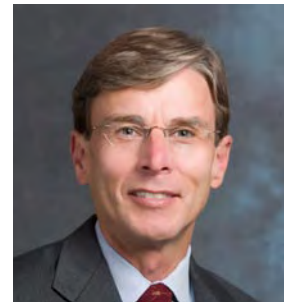
These are critical steps, but we have important work ahead to build the capacities for a prepared health care system. The participation and support of Coalition partners has been and will continue to be essential for our success, both as a region and for each of our health care system organizations across the county.

I thank our partners for their extraordinary contributions to this effort, and I look forward to this continued partnership in preparedness.

Best regards,



David



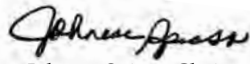
# Executive Council's Letter

Dear Friends,

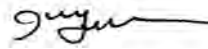
As leaders of health care organizations, we know that emergencies like the 2006 Windstorm can have a significant impact on the health and well-being of the residents of our community. Many health care organizations operate near capacity on a daily basis, struggling to meet patient needs, to attract qualified staff, and to secure sufficient funds to support their operations. In a major disaster like Hurricane Katrina, 9/11, or an outbreak of pandemic flu, our community's health system could be easily overwhelmed.

While we can't prevent disasters from happening, we can prepare for them. There are many actions that individuals and organizations can take to prepare for emergencies. But, individual action alone is insufficient in a disaster. Effective emergency response requires coordinated efforts across a wide range of organizations, combining different skills and resources. The King County Healthcare Coalition is building systems and utilizing collaboration to strengthen the ability of the health care community to respond to emergencies. Nationally, our Healthcare Coalition is recognized for facilitating coordination across the continuum of health care. We are an inclusive forum for planning and response and we welcome the participation of a wide range of health-related organizations. We recognize the enormous challenge of coordinating a large, extremely diverse health system but we are excited by the opportunity to work together to benefit our community.

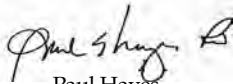
Please join us.



Johnese Spisso, Chair  
Harborview Medical Center



David Grossman, MD, Vice Chair  
Group Health Cooperative



Paul Hayes  
Valley Medical Center



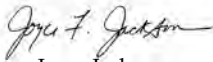
Patty Mulhern  
Visiting Nurse Services of the NW



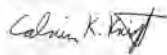
Gayle Ward  
Northwest Hospital



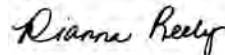
Pamela Piering  
Aging & Disability Services



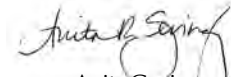
Joyce Jackson  
Northwest Kidney Centers



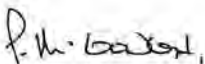
Cal Knight  
Swedish Medical Center



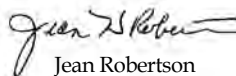
Dianna Reely  
Overlake Hospital Medical Center



Anita Geving  
The Polyclinic



Peter McGough, MD  
University of Washington  
Physicians Network



Jean Robertson  
King County Mental Health, Chemical  
Abuse & Dependency Services Division



Jeff Sconyers  
Children's Hospital &  
Regional Medical Center



Thomas Trompeter  
Community Health Council  
of Seattle & King County

## A Windstorm to Remember

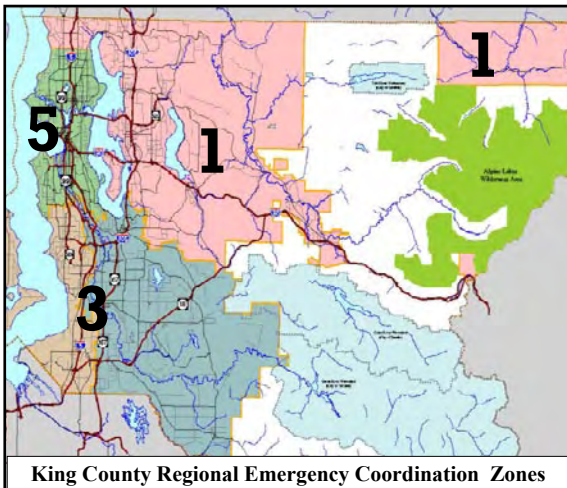
In December 2006, Western Washington experienced one of the most powerful windstorms in the region's history. More than one million people lost power and this had a visible impact on our regional health care system. Hospitals were overwhelmed with people

who needed warmth and food. Long term care facilities were dependent on generators that heated only portions of their facilities making it difficult to provide warm food and clean linen to residents. Ambulatory care facilities without generator backups were forced to temporarily close.



### The Regional Medical Resource Center activates for the first time

As lead agency for the health and medical response in an emergency, Public Health - Seattle & King County (Public Health) activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to manage the health and medical needs of the region, with support from the Healthcare Coalition and the King County Regional Medical Resource Center (RMRC). The RMRC coordinates medical assets, situational information, and communications for the healthcare system countywide. Over the course of the week, the RMRC did the following to support the public health and healthcare systems:



- Tracked the status of 23 hospitals and ambulatory care facilities and over 200 long term care facilities
- Identified the location of generators, fuel for generators, firewood, refrigerated trucks, and transportation services for facilities
- Coordinated with the American Red Cross to deliver cots and blankets to providers that had to move residents or patients to heated areas
- Coordinated with power companies to ensure that healthcare facilities were prioritized for power restoration

As part of the response, the Public Health EOC rapidly organized a medical needs shelter to prevent nursing home residents and individuals with medical needs from overwhelming hospitals. The shelter required significant staffing and medical resources and was operational for five days. This experience has informed current planning for alternate care facilities (ACF) that will manage much larger volumes of patients.



*During the power outage, Public Health sheltered over 35 residents at Bellevue Community College from one nursing home that needed to evacuate due to a broken generator.*

The 2006 windstorm was a wake up call for Public Health and the regional healthcare system. Relative to an event on scale with Hurricane Katrina, this was minor, but important next steps were identified:

- Continue to develop the RMRC to enhance region-wide information and resource management for emergency healthcare delivery
- Clarify roles with our emergency management partners to ensure that they can meet the non-medical needs of our healthcare delivery system
- Develop a system to recruit and manage staff and volunteers in medical shelters and alternate care facilities
- Identify regional strategies to address emergency department saturation challenges

**We Are  
On  
The Right  
Track**

## Glossary

**EOC: Emergency Operations Center** A location where centralized emergency management can be performed. Public Health, county and city governments, and organizations all have EOC's.

**ESF: Emergency Support Functions** A numeric system detailing the missions, policies, structures, and responsibilities for coordinating resource and programmatic support by areas for coordination. ESF-8 represents coordination of the health and medical response.

**HICS: Hospital Incident Command System** Comprehensive incident management system that provides healthcare organizations with tools needed to manage emergency response. HICS is NIMS compliant.

**MAC: Multi-Agency Coordination** A body of representatives who come together to set priorities and objectives for the response. For the King County Health and Medical Response, the Health Officer, Executive Council members, the Medical Examiner, and EMS Medical Directors will comprise the MAC.

**NIMS: National Incident Management System** A system mandated by the Federal government that provides a consistent nationwide approach for governments, the private-sector and nongovernmental organizations to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents. Public Health and hospitals must be NIMS compliant to receive federal funding.

## Looking Back

Since November of 2005, the King County Healthcare Coalition has focused on two major initiatives:

- (1) Building the infrastructure to support a coordinated, regional emergency response across the health system and
- (2) Assisting health care organizations in strengthening continuity of operations and emergency preparedness.

The Healthcare Coalition works with over 41 healthcare organizations and countless partners to improve the status of public health and healthcare preparedness.

In 2007, the Healthcare Coalition and Public Health sponsored regional trainings and exercises that focused on improving healthcare organizations' surveillance capabilities, evacuation planning, compliance with Hospital Incident Command Management System (HICS) version 4, and compliance with the federal requirements for the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

### Did You Know?

Healthcare Coalition planning assists hospitals in addressing over 50% of required Joint Commission Emergency Standards.

Healthcare Coalition staff also provided consultation and technical assistance to Coalition members and partners throughout the year on trainings, exercises, resource acquisition, critical infrastructure enhancement, and regional planning opportunities. In particular, resources were focused on initiating coordination and planning with the long term care, home health and mental health and chemical dependency sectors.



*The Hospital Emergency Preparedness Committee discusses the details of an upcoming exercise with our military partners from Fort Lewis.*



In 2007, Public Health and Seattle Center signed a Memorandum Of Understanding making it the first designated alternate care facility for King County. ACFs serve a variety of functions intended to relieve pressure on local healthcare systems during a response by serving as triage stations, urgent care centers, or inpatient facilities when local healthcare

2007



A healthcare worker provides medical care in an ACF in Louisiana. Public Health and The Healthcare Coalition are working to build this capability in King County.

Photo courtesy LSU Hurricane Info Center

infrastructure is damaged or overwhelmed. During Hurricane Katrina, and most recently in the fires in Southern California ACFs were utilized to augment and replace the healthcare system.

Public Health, The Healthcare Coalition and emergency management partners plan to identify six facilities regionally that will be able to handle over 2,500 patients during a catastrophic event. Operational planning for these facilities will continue in 2008 with our EMS, fire, law enforcement and emergency management partners. Needed equipment and medical supplies are being evaluated and a staffing plan is being developed. The first ACF exercise will occur in the spring of 2008.

*Preparedness requires initiative, determination, creativity and planning. Many of our members face competing priorities, but still manage to excel in their commitment to our vision. In its' inaugural year of recognition, the Healthcare Coalition would like to recognize the following individuals and group of individuals for demonstrating excellence in leadership, collaboration and innovation*

**Excellence in Innovation**

**Dr. Mary King**

Children's Hospital &  
Regional Medical Center

**Excellence in Leadership**

**Palmer Pollack**

Northwest Kidney Center

**Excellence in Collaboration**

**Hospital Strategy Group**

Peter Rigby (Chair), Northwest Hospital

Chris Martin, Harborview Medical Center

Eileen Newton, St. Francis Hospital

Fred Savaglio, Virginia Mason Medical Center

Jeff Lim, Children's Hospital & Medical Center

Marianne Klaas, Swedish Medical Center

Tamlyn Thomas, UW Medical Center

Valerie Dinsdale, Overlake Hospital Medical Center

Excellence In...

## Moving Forward

In September 2007, the King County Healthcare Coalition was awarded a competitive grant to continue partnership building and develop relevant preparedness and response programming that can be used by other jurisdictions nationally. The \$1.9 million grant from the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) will fund projects that address vulnerabilities and gaps identified through assessment and practical experiences such as the windstorm. The grant has a short 10 month deadline so participation from Coalition members and partners and the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice will be critical for the success of the program.



*Transportation and evacuation of victims will be addressed with the new partnership grant received by the King County Healthcare Coalition and Public Health.*

Specifically, the competitive grant will be used to:

- build a system to credential and manage medical volunteers
- develop a regional healthcare evacuation plan
- facilitate joint development of comfort care kits and a distribution plan between palliative care providers and EMS
- administer a healthcare worker survey that will help inform future healthcare staff planning
- perform a program evaluation of the Coalition

**“The only thing harder than planning for an emergency is explaining why you didn’t”**

In collaboration with Public Health's Vulnerable Populations Action Team (VPAT), the Healthcare Coalition will be working to ensure that the needs of vulnerable populations in our community are met during a disaster so competitive funds will also be targeted in this area as well. VPAT works to assure access to Public Health preparedness, response, and recovery information and services through mutually respectful relationships with vulnerable populations and the organizations that serve them. The Healthcare Coalition works with healthcare providers to ensure that these populations have access to the care they need. In 2008 funds will be used for continuity of operations workshops and grants to ensure that non-hospital providers serving vulnerable populations are prepared to stay open during a disaster and serve as a mechanism for providing important information back to Public Health. Funding opportunities will be offered to healthcare providers in winter 2007/2008 and the workshops will commence in the spring of 2008.

The Regional Medical Resource Center (RMRC) provides logistical and planning support to the Public Health EOC, Healthcare Coalition members, and identified healthcare providers during a disaster in King County. The preparedness roles of the RMRC are to ensure critical infrastructure planning, support the acquisition of resources, build communication redundancy, and anticipate and mitigate community impacts on the healthcare system such as the I-5 closure.

2008

## **KCHealthTrac.com will allow for better coordination, tracking and efficiency during a disaster.**

In 2007, the Healthcare Coalition purchased an incident management software system to support the health and medical response, but the real work begins in 2008.



*KCHealthTrac can also be utilized by individual organizations at no cost to manage resources, communication and documentation.*

KCHealthTrac is a web-based system that will support public health, hospitals, ambulatory care facilities, long term care facilities, home health and mental health providers in resource and pharmaceutical tracking, communications coordination, and event alerting.

This software system successfully aided the rescue efforts during the I-35W bridge collapse in Minneapolis in August of 2007.

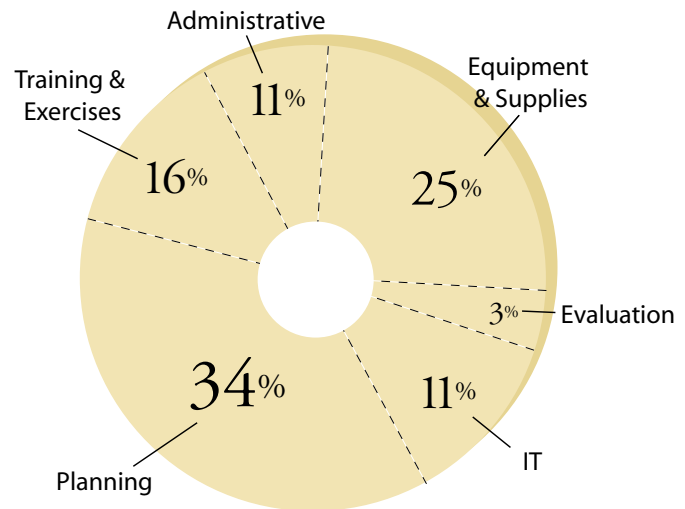
KC Health Trac will be managed by the RMRC and will track and support regional operations such as alternate care facilities and call center coordination. Rollout for the system will begin with hospitals in January of 2008 and will be implemented for the remaining health sectors throughout the year.

## 2007 Financials

In 2007 the Healthcare Coalition received funding support from Executive Ron Sims and the King County Council. King County government is unique nationally for the local support it provides

to develop health and medical preparedness efforts. Federal funds from the Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary of Preparedness and Response (ASPR) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) comprise the remainder of the funds. In 2008, primary funding will be provided by the ASPR competitive partnership grant with supplemental funding from the Centers' for Disease Control(CDC) and the Department of Homeland Security.

Diversity of funding sources is important because federal funds to support preparedness are decreasing overall. The Healthcare Coalition plans to explore funding options including new grants, foundations, and membership dues. Continued investment in Public Health preparedness and The King County Healthcare Coalition, and individual organizations is necessary to ensure that the health and medical needs of the public during a disaster are met in a coordinated and community-based manner.



## Members

Auburn Regional Medical Center  
Children's Hospital & Regional Medical Center  
Community Health Centers of King County  
Country Doctor Community Health Centers  
Enumclaw Regional Hospital  
Evergreen Hospital Medical Center  
Fairfax Hospital  
Franciscan Medical Group  
Fred Hutchison Cancer Research Center  
Group Health Cooperative  
Harborview Medical Center  
Highline Medical Center  
Hospice of Seattle  
International Community Health Services  
Kindred Healthcare  
Minor & James Medical  
Muckleshoot Tribal Health Program  
MultiCare Health System  
Northwest Hospital & Medical Center  
Northwest Kidney Centers  
Overlake Hospital Medical Center  
Pacific Medical Centers  
Pediatric Associates  
Polyclinic  
Public Health Seattle & King County Clinics  
Puget Sound Blood Center  
Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Centers  
Regional Hospital for Respiratory & Complex Care  
SEAMAR Community Health Centers  
Seattle Cancer Care Alliance  
Seattle Indian Health Board  
Snoqualmie Tribal Health Services  
Snoqualmie Valley Hospital  
St. Francis Hospital  
Swedish Medical Center  
University of Washington Medical Center  
University of Washington Physicians Network  
Valley Medical Center  
Virginia Mason Hospital & Medical Center  
Visiting Nurses Services of the Northwest  
Washington Poison Center  
West Seattle Community Hospital  
West Seattle Psychiatric Hospital

## Partners

Aetna  
Airlift Northwest  
American Red Cross  
City & County Emergency Management  
Community Health Plan of Washington  
Consolidated Laundry  
Department of Social & Health Services  
Fire Departments within King County  
First Choice Health  
Home Care Association of Washington  
Hospital Central Services  
King County Medical Society  
King County Sheriffs Office  
King County Medical Examiners Office  
Medical Services Team  
Molina Healthcare  
Northwest Center for Public Health Preparedness  
Paramedic Providers within King County  
Police Departments within King County  
Premera Blue Cross  
Private Ambulance Companies  
Puget Sound Energy  
Qwest  
Regence Blue Shield  
Seattle Aging & Disability Services  
Seattle Center  
Seattle City Light  
Seattle University  
University of Washington  
Verizon  
Veterans Association Puget Sound Healthcare System  
Washington State Hospital Association

**Thank You  
For Your  
Support**

**We Would Like to Extend a Special Thank You to Over  
300 Committee & Workgroup Members from both  
Member and Partners Organizations!**

Alternate Care Facilities Workgroup  
Ambulatory Care Workgroup  
Critical Care Workgroup  
Healthcare Insurers Workgroup  
Medical Directors Committee  
Palliative Care Workgroup  
Pediatric Steering Committee & Workgroup  
Pharmaceutical Taskforce  
Region 6 Hospital Emergency Preparedness Committee & Strategy Group  
Regional Medical Resource Center Software Operational Workgroup

## **Health Officer**

David Fleming, MD, Public Health–Seattle & King County

## **2007 Executive Council**

Johnese Spisso (Chair), Harborview Medical Center  
David Grossman, MD (Vice Chair), Group Health Cooperative  
Anita Geving, The Polyclinic  
Patty Mulhern, Visiting Nurse Services of the NW  
Jean Robertson, King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse &  
Dependency Services Division  
Pamela Piering, Aging & Disability Services  
Cal Knight, Swedish Medical Center  
Paul Hayes, Valley Medical Center  
Jeff Sconyers, Children’s Hospital & Regional Medical Center  
Gayle Ward, Northwest Hospital  
Joyce F. Jackson, Northwest Kidney Centers  
Peter McGough, MD, University of Washington  
Physicians Network  
Dianna Reely, Overlake Hospital Medical Center  
Thomas Trompeter, Community Health Council

## **Staff**

Cynthia Dold, Coalition Program Manager  
Aimee Welch, Memorandum of Understanding Planner  
Onora Lien, Mass Fatality Planner  
Tony Cebollero, Alternate Care Facilities  
Danica Mann, Training & Exercise Coordinator  
Jeff Duchin, MD, Medical Directors Committee  
Amy Eiden, Legal Work Group  
Carlos Dominguez, Long Term Care & Home Health Planner  
Michelle McDaniel, Mental Health Planner  
Joe Crolley, Puget Sound Call Center Coordination Manager  
Allison Schletzbaum, Regional Medical Resource Center Manager  
Lydia Ortega, Program Assistant  
Kay Koelemay, MD, Pediatric Workgroup Planner  
Andy Stergachis, PhD, RPh, Pharmaceutical Workgroup Planner  
Darrell Owens, PhD, Palliative Care Consultant  
Richard Marks, Executive Consultant  
Lewis Rubinson, MD, Consultant

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Want more information about the  
Healthcare Coalition? Go to our webpage  
and check out our monthly newsletters:  
[www.metrokc.gov/HEALTH/hccoalition/](http://www.metrokc.gov/HEALTH/hccoalition/)

**Or contact**

**Cynthia Dold, Healthcare Coalition Program Manager**  
King County Healthcare Coalition  
Public Health, Seattle & King County  
Phone: 206-263-8715 • E-mail: [Cynthia.Dold@kingcounty.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Dold@kingcounty.gov)



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