



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**HAWAII MEDICAL TEAM PREPARES TO JOIN HURRICANE
RELIEF EFFORTS**

HONOLULU — The Hawaii Disaster Medical Assistance Team (Hawaii DMAT) is preparing to deploy medical and support personnel in response to Hurricane Katrina. The Hawaii DMAT is co-sponsored by the Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH) and the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH).

Responding to a request from the Federal Emergency Management Agency early Sunday morning, Hawaii DMAT is preparing to deploy a 10-member medical strike team to the region within 48 hours. In addition, the team will provide personnel to meet specialized needs of the disaster operation on an individual basis.

Dr. Paul Effler, the team's Supervisory Medical Officer and the Chief of the Hawaii DOH Disease Outbreak Control Division left last night to join regional relief efforts in Tennessee. Dr. Effler will join with an Ohio-based team to provide medical and surgical care to disaster victims.

According to the Hawaii DMAT's Team Leader Toby Clairmont of the HAH, "this is the first real-world deployment of the new Hawaii DMAT following a three-day exercise conducted on the big island earlier this month. We are ready to provide support to this devastating disaster and Dr. Effler is a fine example of what Hawaii has to offer when there are people in need here in Hawaii, the Pacific or on the mainland'.

The Hawaii DMAT is jointly sponsored and operated by the Healthcare Association of Hawaii and the Hawaii State Department of Health as part of the National Disaster Medical System. The team consists of about 50 physicians, nurses, paramedics, logistics and communications specialists, respiratory therapists, pharmacists and mental health practitioners.

Team website is <http://www.hah-emergency.net/dmat/default.aspx>

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