



MEETING REPORT
NN/LM Emergency Preparedness & Response Initiative
Hurricane Summit
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
February 8, 2012

On Wednesday, February 8, 2012, the Louis Calder Memorial Library of the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine hosted a summit meeting to share best practices, discuss roles for libraries following a disaster, and facilitate communication and cooperation among librarians and emergency planners in the Miami/Dade County area. The meeting was sponsored through an award by the Southeastern/ Atlantic Region of National Network of Libraries of Medicine's (NN/LM) Emergency Preparedness & Response Initiative. The meeting was planned and moderated by Dan Wilson, Coordinator of the NN/LM Emergency Preparedness & Response Initiative. Local arrangements and technical support were provided by Dr. Mary Moore and the staff at the Calder Library.



AGENDA

- 8:30-9:00** Mary Moore, Chair, Department of Health Informatics, Miller School of Medicine, University of Miami and Executive Director of the Medical Libraries and Biomedical Communications
- 9:00-9:20** Dan Wilson, Coordinator for the NN/LM National Emergency Preparedness & Response Initiative
- 9:20-9:50** Antonio Gonzalez, Public Health Preparedness Planner, Miami/Dade County Health Department
- 9:50-10:00** BREAK
- 10:10-11:10** Raymond Santiago, Library Director of the Miami/Dade Public Library System
- 11:10-11:45** MaryEllin Santiago, Library Consultant: *Bill & Melinda Gates Gulf Coast Libraries Project*
- 12:00-1:00** Lunch (Dr. Art Fournier)
- 1:00-1:30** Stacey Arnesen, Head of the Disaster Information Management Research Center (DIMRC) of the National Library of Medicine (via AdobeConnect)
- 1:30-2:00** Michelle Malizia, Assoc. Director of the NN/LM South Central Region: *South Central Region of NN/LM Survey on Public Libraries and Disaster Response*



**Mary Moore, Department of Health Informatics, Miller School of Medicine, University of Miami, Executive Director of the Medical Libraries and Biomedical Communications:
*University of Miami's Contributions to the Haiti Relief Effort***



Mary Moore opened the meeting by welcoming all participants, and then spoke about the "[University of Miami's Contributions to the Haiti Relief Effort](#)." Dr. Moore cited the closeness of the Miami community to the Haitians as neighbors as a strong motivating force behind their outreach. The Library sent a photographer, Byron Maldonado, to document the operations of the field hospitals in order to derive lessons learned and identify

best-practices. They learned about the importance of credentialing and the need for more nurses, computers, as well as basics like chairs. Comm lines under the ocean had been cut, so there was no cable-carried internet in Haiti. Their outreach efforts included: providing whiteboards, NLM information products, and through the NN/LM EP&R Initiative, basic medical texts as noted in the "[One-Shelf Disaster Library](#)" list. Dr. Mike Kelley, Vice Chairman of Administration at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and participant at the summit, commented that the print resources were used during the Haiti relief effort, as many physician specialists on-site in Haiti found they were dealing with "edge of their credentials" situations. Mary noted that this incident marked the first time that NLM's [Emergency Access Initiative](#) (access to full-text emergency medicine journal articles) was activated. As a result of their outreach activities, Calder Library is still providing follow-up assistance and is using lessons learned to plan ahead. In addition, they are investigating use of thumb drives for storing health information.

Questions:

What types of things would go on the thumb drive?

Mary: They plan to have a focus group with responders and ask what the needs would be. At this point, they are thinking that maps, directories, and other documents would be helpful.

Was there any attempt to track usage on the print materials sent?

Mary: No, but they hope to be able to use partnerships with responders to help them track usage in the future.

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Dan Wilson, Coordinator, NN/LM National Emergency Preparedness & Response Initiative:
Accomplishments and Progress of the NN/LM Emergency Preparedness & Response Initiative



Dan provided background on the NN/LM initiative, summarized activities over the past 5 years, and highlighted some key accomplishments. He noted the [online toolkit](#) and the one-page disaster plan as two tools to help libraries plan for service continuity after a disaster. He noted the [10-Step class](#) offered by NN/LM, which is free and taught both face-to-face and virtually nationwide. A new metric and facet of the training for emergency preparedness and response is the "[15 Features of a High State of Library Readiness](#)" list.

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Anthony (Tony) Gonzalez, Public Health Preparedness Planner, Miami/Dade County Health Department: *The Miami Dade County Health Department Preparedness Role*



Michelle Simanek and Tony Gonzalez

Tony spoke about the training and exercises his department conducts and participates in, including those for employees, partners, and communities. He noted their involvement with setting up and staffing emergency shelters, helping with transport, and their interaction with the Emergency Operations Center for many types of incidents. He stressed the importance of all emergency responders to be prepared at home in order to be able to help others during an emergency. Tony answered many questions from the group, clarifying how the hierarchy of emergency response is organized, how distribution of emergency medical supplies and medicines is managed, and the difference between shelters and "Medically

Managed Facilities" (MMFs). He noted that he does not have an information specialist accessible to his department, and expressed interest in working with the libraries, both public and academic.

Questions:

How would the drug stockpile Tony mentioned be accessed?

Tony: The Public Information Officer (PIO) would make the calls and organize the response.

Are all their disaster plans the same?

Tony: There are many types, depending upon the situation which would need to be addressed; e.g. epidemic, mass migration.

Does Tony think it would be helpful for librarians to have NIMS training or at least be familiar with the terminology in order to assist during an emergency response?

Tony: Yes, especially the [entry level courses](#), and the training is free and online on-demand.

Where do people in Tony's area call for safety/health information after a disaster?

Tony: They publicize a phone number, [311](#), for people to call.

How are the Incident Command System centers set up, i.e. how do multiple ones organize?

Tony: the first one on site is in charge. Needs are addressed first locally, then by region, state, and federal in terms of asking for assistance. The Emergency Operations Commander is in charge of coordinating the ICS centers.

How are temporary sites set up to provide health care?

Tony: they set up "MMFs," Medically Managed Facilities, which are quite different from emergency shelters. Alternative Care Facilities can be set up in place of hospitals, and are quite expensive to deploy.

What information sources does Tony use?

Tony: Google! And benchmarking with other communities. They also have partnerships with other counties. They do not have a librarian available to them, and it would be a great idea to work out a partnership to address this. Raymond added that county librarians are available!

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Michelle Simanek: Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

Michelle spoke about the organization and services of the [Medical Reserve Corps](#), especially opportunities for volunteers to help in preparedness and response activities. Her department maintains a database of volunteers and roles to be filled in an emergency response or public health activity, and they match them up when they receive mission request. Tony added that an incentive to volunteer is that the volunteer and his/her family members would be first to receive countermeasures. Michelle said that UM would be providing a "closed POD" for dispensing prophylactic meds to its internal population. Volunteers are included in training and in exercises along with first responders and public health officials. Mike Kelley noted that training would be taking place there the following weekend, and volunteers could become certified in one day. Several librarians in the group expressed interest in the training.

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Raymond Santiago, Library Director, Miami/Dade Public Library System: *Miami/Dade Public Library System: Responding to Emergencies*



[Raymond Santiago](#) spoke about the increasing importance of libraries after disasters, using Hurricane Andrew in 1992 and subsequent hurricanes as examples. Libraries are now more “at the table” because of the necessity of internet access in recovery and communication. He discussed the library system’s [Continuity of Operations Plan \(COOP\)](#), which focuses on the following essential services:

1. Open as many library branches as operationally feasible
2. Provide limited circulation of library materials
3. Provide information/reference services (FEMA forms, in addition to regular services)
4. Provide internet access (highest priority for community)

All supervisors are required to complete NIMS training, and they hold exercises annually. He detailed many specific responses, such as use of bookmobiles, the importance of an immediate response to deal with mold because of their climate, and re-assigning public services staff to buildings best able to re-open after a hurricane. In addition, all employees are expected to understand and comply with emergency procedures, and supervisors are aware which staff members may require special attention during emergencies. Supervisors are also required to maintain land line telephones at home, since cell towers frequently go out in emergencies.

Questions:

Have you encountered any problems about asking library staff to work when the library might be closed?

Raymond: It’s part of their jobs, and they are hired with that understanding. If you are a supervisor, the understanding is that it’s part of the job as a public servant.

What about employees with special circumstances or needs?

Raymond: They are handled case by case, and will not be treated as disciplinary situations. Sensitivity is required.

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MaryEllin Santiago, Library Consultant: *Bill & Melinda Gates Gulf Coast Libraries Project*



[MaryEllin Santiago](#) related her experience as the Project Manager for the [Bill & Melinda Gates Gulf Coast Libraries Project](#), describing the situation in the Gulf Coast areas of Louisiana and Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, in which entire communities were destroyed. For the few people who still had somewhere to live, there was no infrastructure still there – no rescue services, schools, water, electricity, and certainly no libraries. She described working with the Gates Foundation to identify and address the most

important/highest priority tasks to be accomplished. She noted that of all the aspects of the recovery process they dealt with, the most difficult was the “emotional piece,” both for the people affected and for the relief workers.

Lessons they learned:

- Take advantage of opportunities; e.g. change the ways services are provided, improve the new since the old is gone.
- Don't try to re-build the past; smaller buildings, better locations for the neighborhoods that need the libraries. Technology took a leap into the future as a result of the re-build.
- Libraries are at the table; library leaders are more confident.
- Libraries are essential services (see the [Stafford Act](#) for related information).

Questions:

You mentioned at 50% of the public library directors left their jobs – why did they leave?

MaryEllin: some just were not motivated to start a library from the ground up; others had lost their homes and they and their families had moved away to temporary housing; some had children who were sick. Many were overwhelmed by the personal losses in addition to the loss of their libraries, with building and all materials destroyed.

How were the libraries selected to be re-built by the Gates Foundation?

MaryEllin: the projects were selected based on need; some areas were able to handle their own re-building. The selected sites were all below the clear line of devastation, south of I-10. Lyrasis administered the project. They followed a strict project management paradigm in accordance with Gates Foundation policies and procedures, and everything is documented. They are often called upon to advise now on similar projects.

Is there a way for library directors to learn how to do something similar?

MaryEllin: They did provide training in everything, from how to dress and present professionally to broader issues, and they created a toolkit. Raymond also emphasized the importance of being able to dress and present well in order to play on the same field “with the big boys.” All directors should learn how to be a leader in order to advocate for their libraries.

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Dr. Art Fournier: *Providing Outreach in Haiti: Observations*



Dan Wilson, Mary Moore, Art Fournier

[Dr. Fournier](#), author of *Zombie Curse: A Doctor's 25-year Journey into the Heart of the AIDS Epidemic in Haiti* (2006) and *Vodou Saints* (2011) spoke briefly about his experiences in Haiti. He recommended that responders educate themselves about the issues there; all should learn more about the places we want to help and develop an understanding of the culture. He noted that libraries represent civilization, and should be extended to destroyed areas. He also encouraged

working from the bottom up, incorporating local workers.

Stacey Arnesen, Head of the Disaster Information Management Research Center (DIMRC), National Library of Medicine (*via AdobeConnect session*): *Overview of DIMRC*

Stacey cited the [DIMRC's](#) mission, which is to connect people to quality disaster health information, and to foster a culture of community resiliency, as well as to develop and provide access to health information resources and technology for disaster preparedness, response and recovery. The DIMRC web site contains links to many resources useful to health professionals in emergencies. Stacey demonstrated the various tools provided by NLM such as [WISER](#), [REMM](#), and [CHEMM](#), all of which are useful to first responders and emergency managers. DIMRC also manages a certification program for Disaster Information Specialists through the CE program of the Medical Library Association, at both basic and advanced levels. These are free of charge.

Questions:

How much do these products (WISER, CHEMM, REMM) cost?

Stacey: They are free. (Mary Moore offered to provide training at the Calder Library.)

Regarding the Emergency Access Initiative, are there any plans to provide access to database resources, such as UpToDate?

Stacey: Not that she is aware of, but will look into it.

Are the online classes for the Disaster Information Specialist certification available now?

Stacey: Some are, and some are still in development.

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Michelle Malizia, Associate Director of the NN/LM South Central Region: *South Central Region of NN/LM Survey on Public Libraries and Disaster Response*



Michelle Malizia and Dale Prince

Michelle noted Houston's experience with a succession of hurricanes: Alison, Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike over the past decade, and that they have learned a lot about why people go to libraries. She also noted that even though some events such as hurricanes occur repeatedly over time, every disaster is different; the same disaster never occurs twice. Michelle worked with Karen Vargas, Consumer Health Coordinator at the NN/LM South Central office, and also with Cindy Olney, of NN/LM's Outreach Evaluation Research Center, to create the tools they needed for

their research and to evaluate their results. She described their process for conducting a needs assessment and identifying desired outcomes.

Findings included learning that health care providers and emergency responders need to be aware of the services libraries provide, and that public librarians need to know more about the healthcare professionals and emergency responders. Libraries become information centers for displaced victims; information needs include first aid, local services, environmental hazards, mental health, etc. Cell phones and internet connectivity were not reliable; many people used "air" cards successfully for internet access. A big challenge for library staff was to protect themselves emotionally; some had experience deaths of family members and co-workers, along with much illness and displacement from homes and workplaces.

They determined that the South Central Region would assist by: promoting public libraries to emergency responder communities, providing opportunities for public libraries to network with emergency responders, offering a tutorial called "Mental Health for Librarians During a Disaster," working with a social worker to develop suggested coping strategies, offering the 10-Step training course throughout the region, offering a disaster preparedness award, and developing a buddy system to help public libraries with users' health information needs during hurricanes.

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Takeaways



- 1. An academic health sciences library can play a valuable role in disaster relief efforts of its parent institution.**
- 2. There is a need for better communication between librarians and local emergency planning agencies about how libraries and librarians can help their communities after a disaster.**
- 3. Many emergency responders and managers are not aware of the free tools available to them for emergency response from the National Library of Medicine.**
- 4. Librarians need to learn strategies for better promoting roles for themselves and their libraries in responding to disasters.**
- 5. As in Haiti, often the things needed most are not the “high-tech” items, but the basics, like chairs, coffee, pencils and paper.**
- 6. Knowing how to help victims of disaster emotionally is as important as being able to provide for their physical needs, and is more challenging.**
- 7. Home preparedness is a key component to effective disaster response.**

Many thanks to the many individuals who contributed to the success of the Hurricane Summit:

- **Mary Moore**, Executive Director, Medical Libraries and Biomedical Communications, Chair, Department of Health Informatics, and members of her staff at the Louis Calder Memorial Library, Miller School of Medicine, University of Miami for their hospitality, including use of their space for the meeting, breakfast and lunch for meeting participants, and numerous other details which contributed to a productive and enjoyable meeting experience.
- **Geddy Paulaitis**, Associate Director, Access Services, Vice Chair, Biomedical Communication, Department of Health Informatics, Louis Calder Memorial Library, for creation and production of meeting packets and signage, and for facilitating photography for the meeting. Thanks also to the members of his Biomed Comm staff for all the help with AV for the meeting.
- **Dan Wilson**, Coordinator, NN/LM Emergency Preparedness & Response Initiative, Associate Director for Collections and Library Services, Claude Moore Health Sciences Library, University of Virginia, for planning and moderating the meeting, taking the outdoor photographs used in this report, and for editing and distributing the meeting report.
- **Susan Yowell**, Project Assistant, NN/LM Emergency Preparedness & Response Initiative, Historical Collections Specialist, Claude Moore Health Sciences Library, University of Virginia, for taking minutes for the meeting and writing the meeting report.
- **Dale Prince**, Executive Director, Southeastern/Atlantic Region of NN/LM for coordinating funding for the meeting from NN/LM.
- **Byron Maldonado**, University of Miami, for taking the meeting photographs used in this report.
- All invited speakers, as detailed in the report, for donating their time and for their contributions based on their expertise and experience.

This project has been funded in whole or in part with Federal funds from the National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, under Contract No. HHS-N-276-2011-00004-C with the University of Maryland Baltimore.