Alaska Earthquake 2018: Healthcare Impacts

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Immediate Impacts—Communications

• Radios operational
• Land lines
  – Initially intermittent disruption
  – Quickly re-established
• Cell phone
  – Most providers operational
    • Texts delayed initially—quickly re-established to normal operations
• Internet connectivity unaffected generally
  – Connectivity affected at some locations due to facility destruction and/or power
DHSS EOC Initial Actions

• Activated
  – Building operational and staff able to stay

• Call to all hospitals
  – Phone—intermittent
  – ALMR Radio (Hearnet)
  – Info within 30 minutes

• Gathered situational awareness of non-hospital healthcare facilities/services
  – Nursing Homes
  – Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center
  – Blood Bank
  – Air medical

• Note: facilities received calls from EOC and Licensing
  – State agencies later coordinated to reduce these redundant calls
Statewide Teleconferences

• DHSS EOC distributed first situation report to hospitals and health care partners at 11:17am
• First statewide health teleconference occurred at 11:30am
• Updates from:
  – State DHSS EOC/Epidemiology/Public Health Labs
  – Hospitals in Anchorage
  – Hospital in Mat-Su
  – EMS/Air Medical in Anchorage and Mat-Su
  – Municipality of Anchorage Health Department
• Fielded questions from hospitals
• Provided State DHSS and Muni 24/7 contact information
• Set schedule for the next call
Health System Impact:

* 4 major hospitals located in Anchorage
   – 30% of employees live outside of Anchorage

* No major structural damage—cracks, damaged ceiling tiles, sprinkler heads, carpet, expansion joints

* Water damage to multiple areas: Central Sterile Processing, Peri-operative area, supply storage

* Elevator went to the basement and stayed there
Health System Impact:

- Water main fracture in parking lot
Health System Impact
Local Clinic

• Notification from clinic
• Major destruction—serves Medicaid patients
• Where would these patients go if the clinic could not provide services?
• Structural Engineer assessed—building structurally sound
• Temporary shutdown while repairs completed
Health System Impact
Public Health Laboratory

• Damage to several areas of Anchorage Public Health Laboratory
  – 13 rooms affected
  – Cracks in walls rendered areas unusable
  – Sprinkler break resulted in water, minor flooding

• Only one other state laboratory
  – Fairbanks, different capabilities

• Impacted in-state testing of tuberculosis, botulism, other testing
  – Delays of up to one week in receiving results
  – Botulism from New Year’s Day dinner in Nome
    • 9 ill w/compatible symptoms
    • 1 death

• Decontamination, specialized equipment, training needed to repair
EMAC Request-Behavioral Health

- Emergency Management Assistance Compact
- Anchorage and Mat-Su District schools closed for one week
- Children returning to site where they experienced earthquake
- Identified need for support
- Behavioral health teams through EMAC and HCA Health System
Health Care System
Lessons Learned

An Incomplete List...

• Maintain consistent engagement between health care emergency managers
• Underscores the value of exercises
• Ongoing training for health care facilities in incident command structure
• Review prioritization of health care facilities for infrastructure restoration (example: elevators)
• Opioid/Addiction Treatment Center Planning
• Assisted Living Homes
• Other health care provider types
  – Need non-hospital providers to consider themselves essential and stay open