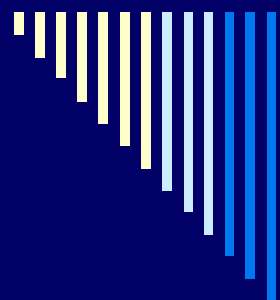


Caring for Hurricane Katrina Evacuees in Primary Care Clinics

Thom Edwards, DO

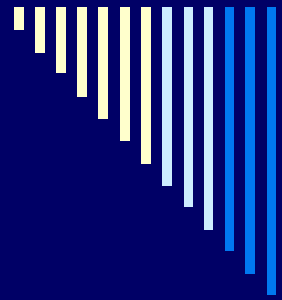
John Peter Smith Hospital

Fort Worth, TX



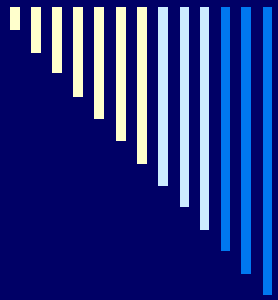
Disaster Planning

- Primary Care Physicians rarely mentioned in disaster planning
- ERs
- Specialists



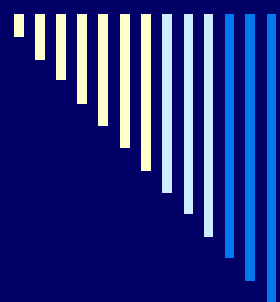
Surge Capacity

- Sudden, unexpected increase in patient volume that would otherwise severely challenge or exceed the current capacity of the health care system



JPS

- The integrated tax-supported county health care system for Tarrant County, Texas
- The nation's largest FPRP
- Additional Resources:
 - 27 community health centers
 - 10 pharmacies



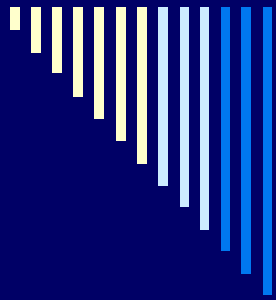
Events

- August 29, 2005 Katrina strikes the gulf coast
- Aug. 31- FEMA activated emergency preparation plans in 6 surrounding states
- AM Sept. 1st- First 250 evacuees arrived in FW via C-130 military transports
- Sept. 2nd- Several thousand more evacuees expected



Disaster Plan Insufficient

- ❑ The predicted several thousand new arrivals would have surpassed the surge capacity of our system
 - ❑ Prior disaster plan prepared for scenarios with ~ 100 acutely ill or injured pts.
 - ❑ JPS coordinated with other local agencies
-



The New Plan

- Centralized receiving center established;
remote from main facility
- Physician/Nurse met each bus
- Immediate needs -> clinics
- No immediate needs -> Shelters (25
total)
 - Each with no more than a few hundred
evacuees



Results

- 3,700 evacuees
 - 1,664 received medical care in 2 wks
 - Most common need: Rx for chronic conditions & skin infection (feet)
 - JPS ED only saw 148 evacuees
 - Most of these arrived by private transport
 - Most not critically ill
 - ED / Hospital NOT overwhelmed
-



Lessons Learned

- ❑ FM docs breadth of knowledge/Skills an invaluable asset given the inherent uncertainties of disasters
 - ❑ The greatest medical need for displaced adult disaster victims in continuation of chronic care
 - ❑ To avoid surpassing surge capacity, initial triage and TX facilities should be distant from ER
-