



The Litaker Group • Case Study

Assessing Hospital Preparedness in nearly 600 Texas Hospitals

Background: There are over 600 hospitals in Texas, ranging from small community hospitals to large medical centers. During an emergency (e.g., pandemic influenza or a bioterrorism attack) these hospitals will be expected to provide services and resources to citizens statewide. As such, these hospitals are expected to support an all-hazards approach to health and medical preparedness. Since 2002, Texas has received tens of millions of dollars in federal funding to augment health and medical preparedness activities at the hospital level. These funds have been distributed at the local level, with the expectation that individual hospitals would meet specific national preparedness benchmarks.

Client Needs: As the responsible entity for hospital preparedness, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) wanted to assess the level of preparedness among the 600 hospitals operating in Texas, using methodologically robust data, statistical analyses, and comparisons to national benchmarks. Such an assessment and gap analysis would serve to focus future initiatives and preparedness funding priorities. To conduct such an analysis, DSHS required experts in health and medical preparedness who possessed training and experience in research design and statistical analysis.

Services Rendered: The Texas Department of State Health Services issued a competitive request for proposal in which The Litaker Group (LG) was the successful applicant. As part of this project, The LG created a proprietary survey to assess ten functional preparedness domains, including: surge capacity, pharmaceutical cache availability, personal protective equipment,


decontamination abilities, communication systems, laboratory preparedness, and training and exercise activities. The LG was responsible for all logistical and operational issues associated with developing, distributing, and collecting the survey. A web-enabled platform was created to allow respondents to enter survey responses online. A response rate of 92.8% was achieved for this survey, with 99% of each question having a valid response. The LG presented a final report describing the findings, gaps, and recommendations to the DSHS executive leadership team (i.e., commissioner of health, senior department heads, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control official for Texas).

Results: The LG provided DSHS with a comprehensive review of current hospital preparedness activities and associated hospital demographic data for 92.8% of hospitals operating within Texas. The results were used to identify and focus future preparedness funding priorities. Specifically, The LG provided detailed recommendations to enhance future hospital preparedness. In addition, the data collected from this study have been used extensively by DSHS to assist with health and medical preparedness planning. (See related case study: Creating a Strategic Vision for Health and Medical Preparedness in Texas.)

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