

ANNUAL REFRESHER R04

Emergency Preparedness

Annual Refresher Training

WHAT YOU'LL REVIEW

Learning Objectives

- 01 Recall the four CMS emergency preparedness elements
- 02 Identify high-risk patient populations requiring priority contact
- 03 Apply the correct procedure during a weather emergency
- 04 Describe how power outages affect equipment-dependent patients
- 05 State your role during an emergency preparedness drill

THE FRAMEWORK

Four CMS Emergency Preparedness Elements

- 01 **Risk Assessment and Emergency Plan** — Agency-level plan addressing Ohio-specific hazards
- 02 **Policies and Procedures** — Written guidance for each emergency type
- 03 **Communication Plan** — How to reach patients, staff, and partners during an emergency
- 04 **Training and Testing** — Annual full-scale exercise, semi-annual tabletop drills

OHIO-SPECIFIC

Ohio Hazard Awareness

- **Tornadoes** — April-June peak; entire state at risk
- **Severe thunderstorms and flooding**
- **Winter storms and ice events** — can isolate patients and block caregiver access
- **Extreme heat events** — highest risk for elderly patients without AC
- **Extended power outages** — any season

KNOW YOUR CASELOAD

High-Risk Patients

Know which patients on your caseload are in high-risk categories:

- **Oxygen-dependent** — concentrators stop working without power
- **Ventilator-dependent**
- **Insulin-requiring diabetics** — insulin storage affected by temperature
- **Dialysis patients** — missed sessions are life-threatening
- **Cognitive impairment** — cannot self-evacuate or call for help
- **Patients who live alone** with no family backup

If you're not sure whether a patient has a documented emergency plan, ask your supervisor.

CRITICAL PROTOCOL

Power Outage — Oxygen-Dependent Patients

- 01 Confirm backup oxygen supply is present and functional (portable cylinder)
- 02 Note the backup cylinder remaining capacity in your visit note
- 03 If backup supply is insufficient or outage is prolonged, **call your supervisor immediately**
- 04 Encourage patients to register with their utility company's Medical Baseline program for priority restoration

DURING WIDESPREAD EMERGENCIES

Business Continuity Tiers

PRIORITY 1 — CRITICAL

Life-sustaining services: oxygen-dependent, ventilator-dependent, wound VAC, insulin-dependent patients living alone. These patients receive care first, no exceptions.

PRIORITY 2 — ESSENTIAL

Patients requiring daily ADL assistance who cannot safely self-care — high fall risk or cognitive impairment.

PRIORITY 3 — DEFERRABLE

Companion care, light housekeeping — services that can be safely delayed 24-48 hours.

Know which tier each of your patients falls into before an emergency occurs.

YOUR ACTIONS

Your Role During a Weather Emergency

- **Do not leave a patient alone** during an active tornado warning or dangerous weather
- Move the patient to the **safest location** (interior room, lowest floor, no windows)
- After the threat passes, notify your supervisor
- **Document all emergency actions** in your visit note
- For winter storms — if roads are impassable, **call supervisor before deciding** to stay or leave

Drills are not disruptions — they are the mechanism that ensures you know what to do when a real emergency occurs.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Scenario

SITUATION

It is a Tuesday morning in April. Jerome is mid-visit with Mr. A, an 83-year-old oxygen-dependent patient who lives alone, when a **tornado warning** is issued for the county. The sky is turning dark green.

- A) Finish the visit quickly and leave before the storm hits
- B) Ask Mr. A if he'd like to move to a safe room
- C) Immediately move Mr. A and his portable oxygen to an interior room on the lowest floor**
- D) Call supervisor and wait for instructions before acting

CORRECT ANSWER: C

Immediate Action Required

A tornado **warning** means rotation has been detected. Do not wait for supervisor direction.

- 01 Move Mr. A and his portable oxygen to the **hallway bathroom** — interior, no windows
- 02 Cover Mr. A with a blanket to protect from flying debris
- 03 Stay with Mr. A until the warning is lifted
- 04 Check home for damage, check Mr. A for injury
- 05 Call supervisor to report
- 06 Document: time of warning, patient's condition, all actions taken

SUMMARY

Key Takeaways

- Know the **four CMS elements** of emergency preparedness
- Identify your **high-risk patients** and know their emergency plans
- Tornado WARNING = **immediate action** — do not wait for instructions
- Power outage + oxygen patient = **call supervisor immediately** if backup is insufficient
- Know your patients' **business continuity tier** before emergencies occur
- **Drill participation is mandatory** — CMS requires documented training for all staff

ANNUAL REFRESHER R04 COMPLETE

Emergency Preparedness

Scroll down to complete the Knowledge Check.
5 questions — you need 80% to pass.