

Plan Development Process

February 18, 2014

Principles of Plan Writing

- Planning is incident command dependent
 - Can't depend on a single person in a response situation – quickly ineffective
 - But, a single person can be the lead planner
- Don't have the same material in more than one plan
 - Can be duplicated between physical locations
- Don't use self-directive language
 - Acknowledge gaps
 - Propose solutions
 - Solve remaining gaps as you can
- Proposing solutions is a necessity
 - Proposed solutions should be part of the plan but clearly designated (e.g., text color and note)
 - Nobody may like your proposed solution, but they have to come up with a better one – that would be the best outcome

Principles of Plan Writing

- Good to use others plans – but not as a bypass to planning
 - Planning templates – boiler plate vs.
 - Planning templates – outline
- Will there be subsidiary plans (e.g., ward A, x-ray)? What will be their relationship to primary plan?
- Attachments and Annexes
 - Attachments are technical information (e.g., contact info, floor plans, equipment)
 - Annexes are related plans, subsidiary to the primary plan
 - The pandemic plan may have an attachment with the brands and numbers of N95 respirators used in the facility as well as a worker protection annex
 - What is an appendix? (Besides something on a colon)
- An un-vetted plan is not yet a plan

Elements of a Plan

- Have you ever seen a plan that looked like it was copied out of a manual (great information but none of it specific to the facility?)
- Have you ever seen language in a plan like:
 - During the pandemic, we will determine where to store the deceased.
- A plan is more than information and a plan solves problems before the event

Elements of a Plan

- Factual information
 - Human remains can be stored at 40 degrees for X days, 50 degrees for Y days, or 60 degrees for Z days
- Situational assessment
 - The elevation of the facility is 1842 ft above sea level; the highest reported river level is 1845
- Assumptions
 - In the event of a pandemic, elective surgery will be halted when surge cases exceed capacity
 - The resources is shortest supply will be IVF and staff

Elements of a Plan

- Responsibility
 - The DON will be responsible for opening the DOC and notifying the incident command team
- Resources
 - The facility does not have an alternative source of drinking water. If the facility is cut off by flood waters, tankers could not come in. (GAP)
 - The facility has purchased three 500 gallon disposable water bladders for potable water to be filled during any event which could threaten the water supply.
- Policy
 - The facility will attempt to accommodate any staff member who wishes to stay in the facility during the disaster

Elements of a Plan

■ Priorities

- In the event of insufficient pandemic vaccine for all employees, highest priority will be ER and ICU nurses and incident command staff

■ Procedures

- If the facility must be evacuated through flood water, patients will be carried down stairway B to the loading dock for loading on transports

■ Triggers

- Once flood waters reach 1925 feet outside the levee, all ICU patients and patients over 200 lbs will be evacuated from the facility.

Elements of a Plan

- Attachments
 - Incident command team 1: names and contact information

Purpose of a Plan

- Provide a framework for identifying, describing and discussing response situations and actions
- Document decisions that have been made
- Provide estimates of magnitude (e.g., number of gallons of service water required to run chillers per 24 hours)
- Provide a method for identifying gaps
- Provide a forum for framing proposed solutions
- Provide a method for sharing planning

Creating a Planning Template

- We will discuss a type of template designed for pandemic influenza in future sessions
- Template will need to be fleshed out
 - Coordinate public information messages with local and state JIC
 - Spokesperson for organization
 - PIO at daily briefings with NDDoH
 - Vetting of press releases
 - Review by IC with sign-off
 - Review by CEO or acting substitute
- The use the detailed template to write narrative

Filling Gaps

- Know the limits of your authority to fill gaps
- Types of gaps
 - Information – may be simple or complex to collect
 - Group decision – may be administrator's responsibility to go to group (e.g., board of directors)
 - Resources – determine what is available and what is needed (may require purchase recommendation)
 - Calculations based on data and assumptions
 - Policy decision – refer to appropriate authority
 - Solution is requirement dependent (e.g., training)
 - Contingency gaps– staffing if 40% of nurses out sick

Vetting the Plan

- Three levels minimum
 - Higher administrative authority (e.g., CEO)
 - Plan review –venue for presenting to key internal stakeholders (training and discussion)
 - Tabletop exercise – opportunity to discuss solutions, raise awareness, and test proposals
- Can add
 - Functional or full scale exercise – testing complete plan only
 - Vetting with external stakeholders

Creating Tabletop Exercises

- Very flexible tool that can engage many persons at once
 - Training
 - Solutions
 - Testing
- Focus on those aspects of plan which are in doubt
 - Got evacuation down because you did it three times since 2009? Don't need a tabletop.
- The scenario is easy (e.g., all pandemic scenarios look a lot a like). It's the questions that are tough.

Creating a Tabletop Exercise

- Writing questions – how to identify potential questions
 - If the lead planner isn't sure how something will be accomplished, others will be confused too.
 - Have there been past performance problems? Go after them.
 - Where are your vulnerabilities (e.g., generators, potable water, placement of electro-mechanical room, can't vertically evacuate, staffing?)?
 - What happens when plans don't go as expected?
 - What are the planning gaps that need answers?
 - Where are the barriers (political, communication, legal, economic, resource, etc.)?
 - Resurrect old issues from years past
 - Events which have never occurred, but could happen. Ever evacuated a facility in a blizzard? Fargo has.

Creating a Tabletop Exercise

- What doesn't make a good question
 - We got that down
 - It's not solvable (at least in the immediate future)
 - But maybe we need to search for an alternative – that's a reasonable topic
 - It's not priority (it's identified, documented, but not supported)
 - Yes, I have my pet peeves – I'll hold them until a teachable moment
 - Very low probability (e.g., good, sound structure? We've no earthquakes to speak of in ND) – go to something else.