

ECN News

Environment of Care | Emergency Management | Life Safety

Spotlight on Success

Safety PreparAthon provides staff education

by Mark Kaldahl, HSD

In a time when health care organizations are continually challenged to improve patient outcomes, reduce risks to patients and staff, and reduce costs, making time for safety training can often be difficult. Health care organizations are tasked with increasing patient satisfaction, improving scores on employee safety culture surveys, and finding ways to keep staff actively involved in fire and emergency management drills and exercises. Nevertheless, organizations can reap significant benefits from providing training and education for staff on how they can contribute to safety in their organization, as well as to continuous Joint Commission survey readiness.

Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital (CFMH) in Rocky Mount, Virginia, has met this challenge head on. The hospital recently held a two-day education event for all staff, dubbed the Safety PreparAthon. “The Safety PreparAthon included training and educational materials related to infection prevention and control, patient safety, emergency management, and life safety topics,” says Betty Underwood, safety/emergency management consultant at CFMH.

“CFMH employs approximately 270 workers. Of those, 104 attended the PreparAthon,” Underwood explains. To create this event, the hospital divided a four-section auditorium into stations, each addressing a specific component of the education. Among the subjects addressed at the event that relate to environment of care were the following:

- General safety
- Fire safety
- Weather safety
- Disaster triaging
- Emergency management

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Charlie Brumfield completed the Fire Safety questionnaire.

Photo Credit: Courtesy of Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital. Used with permission.

ENVIRONMENT OF CARE				
WEATHER	HAZARDOUS WASTE	FIRE	CODES	ACRONYMS
200	200	200	200	200
400	400	400	400	400
600	600	600	600	600
800	800	800	800	800
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000
Bonus Question: 5000 pts				



Henry Patterson assists in the Med Sled Training.
Photo Credit: Courtesy of Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital. Used with permission.

Topic 1: 200

- **Question:**
- This alert means a tornado has been sighted in the area or has been indicated by National Weather Service Doppler radar.
- **Answer**
- What is a tornado warning?
 - When a warning is issued, take cover immediately.

Back

Topic 1: 400

- **Question:**
- In the U.S., this kills an average of 53 people each year. All thunderstorms produce this effect, and all have the potential for other dangers, including tornadoes, strong winds, hail, wildfires and flash flooding.
- **Answer**
- What is lightning?

Back

The above examples show how Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital used interactive games to educate staff about safety risks in the environment of care. This game was modeled after the television game show *Jeopardy!*[®]

Source: Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital. Used with permission.

Multifaceted educational approach

The hospital used a variety of strategies to educate employees during this event. For instance, patient safety storyboards were displayed throughout the auditorium that address these and other safety concerns. The hospital used popular themes to help make the learning fun and capture the staff's attention. For example, a football-themed board presented key information related to National Patient Safety Goals, teamwork, and time-outs before surgery.

The event also featured a simulated environment for a learning activity CFMH called, "A Hospital Room of Horrors." This mock patient room mirrored the hospital's regular patient rooms and contained 16 patient safety, occupational safety and health, and environment of care hazards. Staff participating in this activity received a form and were asked to walk through the room. Their goal was to identify at least 10 of the safety hazards for a chance to win a door prize.

The safety hazards simulated in the room included the following:

- Bed up in the air, not in lowest position (with patient in bed)
- Side rail down
- Call bell out of patient's reach
- Patient's own medicine bottle in his hand
- Urine specimen on bedside table, and nurse's drink right beside it
- Unlabeled medication syringes left on bedside table
- Patient not wearing identification bracelet (bracelet was taped to bed)
- Wheelchair beside bed unlocked
- Extension cord in the room (which is also a trip hazard)

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- Red biohazard bag in regular trash can
- Foley catheter up on bed, not lowered to gravity
- Space heater in patient's room

Learn by playing

Another key component of the Prepar-Athon involved exercises modeled after popular games. For example, employees who were learning about time-outs before surgery practiced time-outs using the board game Operation®. Participants also engaged in a game focused on the environment of care and emergency management issues, based on the television game show Jeopardy!®, which involves players receiving clues and then responding to the clue in the form of a question.

Topics in this game included fire safety, emergency management, security, utilities, hazardous waste, and hospital-specific policy and procedures. Staff selected a category, received an answer, and had to provide the question to correspond with that answer. (See the examples on page 3.)

In another game, employees spun a wheel to select a category that challenged them with questions about the environment of care issues. “The interactive games were fun but also challenged and engaged employees while they were being educated,” Underwood says.

Hands-on training

In other areas of the hospital, employees engaged in hands-on training. Employees practiced moving their colleagues down flights of stairs using special “sleds” designed for moving patients during disasters, fires, or other emergencies requiring evacuation. At least 27 staff members participated in this training.

Outside the building on hospital grounds, staff participated in fire extinguisher training. Fires were started in a containment barrel, and staff had the opportunity to practice their skills and

Fire Drill Observer Reporting Tool

FIRE DRILL OBSERVER REPORT

ALARM LOCATION: _____ TIME: _____

OBSERVER NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Before starting the drill, be sure to contact:

- The House Supervisor / Administrator-on-Call (when they are on site)
- Surgery
- The Fire Alarm Monitoring Station @ 1-800-xxx-xxxx Account Number xxx-xxxx
- Local Fire and Police Dispatch Office @ xxx-xxx-xxxx

PRE-DRILL EVALUATION			
YES	NO	N/A	
			Doors were not propped open with other than approved hold open devices?
			Carts & equipment not in use were not stored in the corridors?
			If carts & equipment were in use, were they stored to one side of the hallway?
			Exit lights working?
			Stairways clear?
R = RESCUE			
			Staff checked area for fire and removed occupants from danger?
A = ACTIVATE			
			Staff knew location of fire alarm pull boxes and how to use them?
			Staff knew the emergency phone number to contact the operator?
C = CONTAIN			
			Staff closed doors and left the lights on?
			Staff asked patients & visitors to stay in their rooms?
			Staff knew the location of emergency oxygen shut-off valve(s)?
			Staff knew how to turn off the emergency oxygen shut-off valve(s)?
			Staff knew when to turn off the emergency oxygen shut-off valve(s)?
E = EXTINGUISH			
			Staff knew the location of the nearest fire extinguisher?
			Staff knew how to use the fire extinguisher (staff could demonstrate the “PASS” motions)?
HOSPITAL FIRE PLAN – RACE			
			Were staff able to follow the RACE procedure without coaching?
			Staff knew what to do if the fire <i>was not</i> located on their unit?
E = EVACUATE THE AREA			
			Staff knew their fire escape route without referring to a reference?
			Staff knew the location of the nearest smoke compartment?
			Staff could explain how to conduct a “horizontal evacuation” of their area?
			Staff could explain how to conduct a “vertical evacuation” of their area?
			Staff could identify where their “Evacuation Assembly Point” is located?
PERSONNEL			
			Did Security staff report to the scene?
			Did Facility Services staff report to the scene?
BUILDING			
			Were you able to hear the announcement giving the location?
			Were you able to hear the horns/chimes in the drill area?
			Did the fire doors close properly?
			Did all the strobe lights in the area work properly?
			Did the electric door locks unlock?
			Were all the corridors cleared of equipment (med carts, food carts, EVS carts, etc.)
SCORING			
			90% – 100% = EXCELLENT
			80% – 89% = SATISFACTORY
			79% OR BELOW = UNSATISFACTORY (FOLLOW-UP TRAINING/REPEAT DRILL)

Notes

I have reviewed the hospital's fire plan *RACE* with those staff participating in this drill. The signature of those participating in this drill can be found on the back of this form.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital used this Fire Drill Observer Reporting Tool to evaluate their performance during fire drills. Used with permission.

put out the fire using a fire extinguisher. PreparAthon participants included all levels of staff, including leaders. “Employees as high up the ladder as our administrator and our director of nursing stated that [the PrepareAthon] was the


first time they have ever actually used a fire extinguisher.” says Underwood. Staff on all levels indicated that they enjoyed the event and that they found much value in this training.

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Though the hospital considers the Safety PreparAthon a valuable training opportunity, this is not the only time during the year that these safety messages are heard. Every fire drill conducted at CFMH involves staff addressing a list of fire safety questions; for example, staff are asked to explain the acronym “PASS.” PASS stands for Pull, Aim, Squeeze, and Sweep, and it provides guidance on how to use a fire extinguisher. These principles, taught at the PreparAthon, are reinforced throughout the year during monthly department drills, annual education programs, and periodic staff interviews. (See the sample of the Fire Drill Observer Reporting Tool that

CFMH used during this exercise on page 4.)

Going forward, CFMH is thinking bigger, particularly in the area of emergency management. “We hope to expand this event next year to include agencies throughout the region,” says Underwood. “Their expertise will help broaden education on topics such as weather spotting, mass casualties, and other disaster-related topics.” 



Letitia Furrow puts out the fire while Wayne Scott and Henry Patterson look on.

Photo Credit: Courtesy of Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital. Used with permission.

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