

Iowa Functional Needs Planning Toolkit

ATTACHMENT 8

**Cerro Gordo County
Emergency Response Plan
Support Annex
Special Needs-Emergency Shelters**

Primary Agencies:

Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health
Cerro Gordo Department of Human Services
Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management

Support Agencies:

American Red Cross
Salvation Army
North Iowa C.E.R.T.

I. SPECIAL NEEDS DEFINITION

A. Purpose: For the purposes of disaster response “special needs populations” refers to those individuals whose physical, emotional/cognitive, and/or medical conditions are such that even with help from families or friends, they would not be able to meet their basic needs during a 48-72 hour emergency period. The level of care needed by this population exceeds the basic first aid level of care that is available in general public shelters.

Care givers are expected to accompany persons with special needs to all special care shelters and are responsible for the patients care during disaster evacuation and sheltering. Persons with special needs that do not have a care giver will first try to be placed in an existing facility with twenty four hour per day care and if unavailable a special needs volunteer will be provided for the person.

Patients in long-term care facilities, residents in adult care homes, group homes, or hospice agencies, etc. who require additional assistance are expected to have a disaster care plan developed by their residential facility to meet their individual needs in the event of an emergency.

When conditions extend the stay in special care shelters, caregivers are expected to make arrangements for their own respite and are responsible for getting the person placed in a facility. Referrals to social workers will be made for this assistance. Additionally, caregivers are responsible for the care of assistance animals needs during sheltering (for example, food and elimination concerns.)

II. SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTER-SITE SELECTION

A. Facilities: It is preferable to have several sites available for Special Needs Shelters. Ideally they should be located in various sections of the county and in areas with a high concentration of the Special Needs Population. In order

for a proposed shelter site to be deemed suitable for selection, it should have, as a minimum, alternate power generation source, be accessible according to Americans with Disabilities Standards, and be large enough to have the capability needed to meet the projected needs of the Special Needs Population.

- B. Admission Criteria:** The special needs individuals are not considered “admitted” to the facilities. However, it is important for facilities serving as special needs shelters to obtain basic information about the patient, such as the patient’s physician, current medications, special diet needs, current treatment, allergies, communication needs, assistive devices, etc. A voluntary Special Needs Registration process shall be used (Attachment 2) in determining the potential need for the facility. In addition to the pre-registration card, an actual event registration (Attachment 4A-4C) must be completed upon entering the Special Needs Facility for accountability purposes.
- C. Medication and Record Security:** Since special needs populations are expected to bring a minimum three day supply of their own medications, shelter facilities need to have a reasonable plan for the safe storage including possible refrigeration of those medications. Caregivers will be expected to administer medications as well as maintain and securely keep the records for the care receiver.
- D. Transportation to and from Facilities:** When conditions allow, caregivers are expected to be the primary transporters. When conditions do not permit, Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency will be contacted to coordinate transporting of special needs populations and their caregivers to and from the shelters.

III. SPECIAL NEEDS REGISTRATION PROCESS

The Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency, in conjunction with the local utility companies, by mail, newspaper, telephone books, social services, church organizations or medical facilities has established a confidential, voluntary, pre-event registration process. This process should assure that emergency Management and human service officials can identify and assist individuals who live in a private home/residential setting, and have physical or mental challenges, requiring special assistance or sheltering during a disaster. The registry provides basic contact information concerning the individuals that will assist the Emergency Response Partners to adequately plan and allocate resources for the Special Needs population.

- A. Special Needs Registry Forms:** The Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency will use two forms for Registration. One will be the Special Needs Registration Card (Attachment 4A) distributed on an annual basis through various organizations. The second, a more detailed form, will be used during the actual registration in the shelter (Attachment 4B).

B. Administration and Maintenance of the Special Needs Registry: Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management will maintain the Special Needs Registry. Data will be collected through the annual Special Needs Registration Program sponsored annually by the local utility companies, by mail, newspaper, telephone books, social services, church organizations or medical facilities; through the efforts of Mercy Hospital and Cerro Gordo County Public Health, Home Health Care Agencies and through various social services organizations working with various Special Needs Groups in the community.

- The Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) processes the registrations and maintains a central special needs database, with assistance or input from key human service organizations.
- The Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency coordinates with various human service agencies and organizations which each maintain their special needs registry based on the population they serve. Emergency Management's role is to assure a coordinated effort with no gaps in coverage, while respecting the privacy of the registrants.

C. Determining Eligibility for the Registry: No statement of need or medical necessity is required from a physician for anyone who wishes to participate in the Special Needs Registration program. This free and confidential service is available, to any Cerro Gordo County resident who wishes to voluntarily register. All residents with physical or mental challenges who live independently in a home or residential setting are eligible and encouraged to participate.

A special needs registry cannot and should not be relied upon to be the only mechanism to identify and provide services to persons in need of Special Needs sheltering. Registrants should be encouraged to develop individual evacuation and sheltering plans with family, caregivers and others in their support system if possible. Persons who need assistance or help completing the form should contact the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency at (641) 421-3665 for assistance.

D. Confidentiality Issues: Confidentiality is a key concern when setting up and maintaining the Special Needs Registry. The information collected will be stored and maintained by the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency and will **NOT** be shared with any agency except during emergency conditions and, even then, only with those agencies directly involved in meeting the emergency needs of the Special Needs Registrant.

It is generally not necessary for an emergency official transporting someone to shelter to know specific medical details. However, it is important to know

information about logistical needs, such as the fact that a person is confined to a wheelchair or needs a place to store refrigerated medications.

In order to maintain confidentiality about medical conditions, the Special Needs Registration Program will focus on functional or cognitive needs, NOT medical diagnosis.

E. Special Needs Advisory: The Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management will provide on-going oversight for the development and maintenance of the Special Needs Registry, as well as other relevant issues with the assistance from a Special Needs Advisory Committee. This committee will address a number of related issues including a coordinated effort to promote pre-registration for planning purposes, sheltering and evacuation issues for those with special needs, disaster relief for special needs populations, and unmet needs following a disaster.

Agencies utilized for registry lists and in an advisory capacity on the special needs sheltering includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Emergency Management Agency Representatives
2. Community Volunteers
3. Utility Representative
4. Cerro Gordo County EMS Association
5. Elderbridge Agency Representative
6. North Central Iowa Chapter, American Red Cross Representative
7. Department of Human Resources Representative
8. County Public Health Department Representative
9. Area Mental Health Representative
10. ARP Representative
11. Mercy Medical Center North Iowa Representative
12. School Representative
13. Other appropriate organizations serving special populations

F. Unmet Needs: The Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency will develop a public education program to insure the Special Needs Registrants are aware of the specific services that can and will be provided in the event of an emergency. Registrants are also encouraged to have a personal emergency plan and to involve family members, caregivers and friends in their disaster planning process.

IV. SHELTER ACTIVATION

During a disaster warning period, the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency is responsible for ensuring that potentially effected registrants are contacted and their needs are met.

- During a disaster, Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency would alert each of these agencies of the situation. Arrangements to contact each registrant and follow up on their needs should be worked out ahead of time by the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency.
- In most cases, each individual service provider agency will be asked to take responsibility for checking on the individuals listed on its own special needs registry.
- The Special Needs-Medically Fragile Emergency Shelter(s) will be activated by the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency based on a determination that the community faces a disaster. The County Emergency Plan will need to be activated.
- A Memorandum of Understanding will be coordinated between the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency and the Facility Manager of any site selected as a Special Needs Shelter. This Memorandum of Understanding will address the responsibilities for each agency.

When human service agencies encounter a situation beyond their capability, they should immediately alert the Emergency Management Agency of the situation.

A. Facility Reporting for Special Care Shelters: When the decision is made to activate a special care shelter, the coordinator will be responsible to the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Director or designee to submit periodic reports to the Local and/or State EOC on the shelter operations, including population served, meals provided and staff sign-in sheets. (Attachment 5-7)

V. LIABILITIES

The initial site designated for the Special Needs Shelter shall be determined at a later date. In time, additional facilities will be established. The facility used for the Special Needs Shelter will not be liable for any injuries to those persons using the Special Needs Shelter or their caregivers or for any damages to the personal property of those persons using the Special Needs Shelter or their caregivers. The Facility Manager will be responsible for opening the facility and also to insure the facility is lighted and accessible to the Special Needs Population.

Persons assisting in the operation of the Special Needs Shelter will also be held harmless and not liable for any action in the conduct of the shelter operation. Persons working the

shelter are considered to be volunteers of the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency in support of a local disaster or emergency condition.

Persons who use the Special Needs Shelter only for scheduled treatments and are not staying in the shelter full time should not leave their equipment or medications in the shelter when they are not using the shelter without the permission of the Facility Manager. Special arrangements can be made on a case-by-case basis, although the facility cannot be held liable for the security of any equipment, medication or dietary supplements left unattended.

The Special Needs Shelter is designed only to provide a place with electricity for the person's medical assistance device or medication that must remain refrigerated or for those persons that require medical assistance from a caregiver or additional equipment. Caregivers are to provide the services needed. Other medical services will not be provided. If it appears that the individual needs more advanced care, the Shelter Coordinator should contact the county EOC to arrange for placement in a hospital.

Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency will contact all agencies that we have (MOU's) with to arrange transportation of the individual to the hospital, nearest medical clinic or shelter.

VI. SHELTER STAFFING

- The Shelter Coordinator will be assigned from the Cerro Gordo County EOC.
- Medical oversight will be provided by the Board of Health physician or his/her designee.
- Registration and general support will be provided by volunteer staff.
- Logistical support and general assistance to the Shelter staff will be provided by the Cerro Gordo County EOC.
- Direct patient care will be provided by the individual caregiver of the Special Needs individual.
- Staff will check in and out on staff roster form.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS

Regular communications such as a telephone and radio will be used for communications between the Special Needs and the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). In the event of communications problems, a Radio Operator will be assigned to each shelter. The HAM Radio Operator will use Radio equipment to keep in touch with the EOC.

In the event that no radio or telephone communications exist, DMIS shall be used if backup power is available. A runner system will be established as a last resort to keep each entity informed of the circumstances.

A PIO will be established for the incident and information in the form of PSA's and interviews will all be routed to the PIO for communication to the media and the public. Press releases will be created and communicated as information becomes available especially with the specifics of the sheltering. Guidance for communication with the PIO can be referenced in ESF #15.

VII. PET CARE

Assistance animals are an important consideration. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, an animal used by an individual to assist with a disability, such as a guide dog for a person with a visual impairment, must be permitted both in regular public evacuation shelters and in special needs shelters. The registration form is designed to include information about assistance dogs so their needs can be anticipated and they can be evacuated and sheltered appropriately. **Other animals which are not valid assistance animals are not allowed in the special needs shelters.**

IX. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Those who will seek assistance at any of the Special Needs Shelters have a few individual responsibilities:

- Bring their own caregiver (if one is necessary)
- Bring own equipment or medical device
- Bring own medicines or special dietary needs
- Abide by shelter rules (Attachment 7A)

X. CAREGIVER INSTRUCTIONS

The Special Needs Shelter is operated in a manner to provide electricity to facilitate a setting similar to what could be experienced in a home setting. The Shelter is designed to assist the caregiver in administering similar medical treatment as was being administered at home.

The assigned or designated Caregiver of any person using the Special Needs Shelter will be responsible for ensuring quality care is given to the patient. The staff operating the Special Needs Shelter will be able to provide medical oversight but will not be required to administer any direct care. The Site Coordinator (RN) and the medical oversight coordinator will be accessible to observe the support available and to facilitate transfer to the hospital as necessary for more comprehensive care.

It will be the responsibility of the caregiver of the patient to insure all treatments and medications are given as prescribed. If the caregiver has any questions about the administration of treatment, then the Site Coordinator can be consulted.

Special Note: The Special Needs Shelter will only be available for the special needs patient and their immediate caregiver. Because of limited space and resources, family members, friends or associates may not be admitted to the Special Needs Shelters. Other shelters may be available to house the general public depending on the nature of the emergency.

SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTER PATIENT CATEGORIES

DEFINITIONS;

Level 1 -Condition requires hospitalization

Level 2 -Condition can be supported by a Special Needs Shelter

Level 3 -Conditions do not require additional support and individual can use the General Community Shelter

For the purpose of identifying special needs shelter residents, the following support levels are defined and designated. The care provider and shelter term guidance is also indicated for each category. It should be noted that there may be persons with impairments not included in this list that could be appropriately served in a special care shelter. Each individual's needs and level of care should be determined on a case by case basis.

Support Level 1 includes individuals requiring recurring professional medical care, special medical equipment and /or continual medical surveillance. These patients are more acutely ill and need advanced medical assistance and supervision.

Terms of Shelter: The Special Needs Shelter and the General Community Shelters are not suitably staffed or equipped to meet the medical support requirements of Level 1 individuals. These patients may need to be considered for admission into a hospital or nursing home.

Care Providers: The care for persons in this support level will be provided by the hospital. Individual caregivers will accompany the Level 1 individuals to the hospital to ensure that the hospital staff is aware of the condition of the patient in case the person is not able to provide the necessary information on their own.

Examples of Support Level 1 illness or presentation:

Persons in this support level include, but are not limited to, the following:

Comatose patients

Paralyzed persons who are not wheelchair mobile

Severely mentally disturbed persons (potentially violent)

Persons with severe mental illness Persons with server mental retardation

Persons in the end stages of Alzheimer's

Persons with unstable grand mal seizures

Unstable cardiac patients

Dialysis patients

Ventilator dependent patients unless chronic and managed by caregiver

Support Level 2-Special Needs Shelter: this Shelter is specifically designed to provide electricity for individuals requiring some type of medical assistance device or requiring refrigeration of medication. The only "assistance" that these individuals often needs is just access to electricity and possible equipment to allow them to continue their prescribed course of treatment which will keep them out of the hospital.

Terms of Shelter: Shelter residents in Support Level 2 may be accommodated in the Special Needs extended period when the community is without electricity or the individual cannot return to their home for some reason. Transfer to a more appropriate facility may be considered on a case by case basis. A registered nurse provided by the local health department or another medical provider at a minimum must be present at all times in the designated Special Needs Shelter.

Care Providers: The care for persons in Support Level 2: Special Needs will be provided by the individual or regular caregiver of the individual. If unavailable then a trained volunteer will be assigned.

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Examples of Support Level 2 illness or presentation: Persons in this support level include, but are not limited to the following:

- Severe respiratory illness patients (oxygen generators, routine use nebulizers, or chronic ventilator dependent clients completely managed by a caregiver)
- Persons requiring intravenous feeding or medications
- Persons that require medication management
- Persons with severely reduced mobility requiring electrically powered assist devices
- Persons with severe apnea requiring electrical powered devices
- Persons that require special mobility devices
- Persons that require assistance with personal care
- Persons that need refrigeration of medications

Support Level 3 includes individuals who are living independent in the pre-shelter phase and are capable of performing activities of daily living. Some of these individuals may need limited special assistance or some surveillance due to pre-existing health problems or the stress of the event.

Terms of Shelter: Individuals in this support level should be able to stay in regular public shelters unless additional health problems arise. The Disaster Health Services Staff will be able to provide the care that is necessary. If the care required exceeds American Red Cross protocols, then other arrangements in a special care shelter, hospital, or other facility may be necessary.

Care Providers: Persons in this support level may not require special care, but may need surveillance and monitoring in order to detect potentially serious medical developments. Some persons may need limited physical assistance.

Examples of Support Level 3 Special Needs Population: Persons in this support level include, but are not limited to the following:

- Persons with epilepsy
- Persons with mild to moderate muscular disease
- Heart patients with mechanical devices (pacemakers, implanted defibrillators)
- Hemophiliacs
- Persons with artificial limbs
- Persons who are visually or hearing impaired

- Heart patients with mechanical devices (pacemakers, implanted defibrillators)
- Hemophiliacs
- Persons with artificial limbs
- Persons who are visually or hearing impaired
- Persons in a walking cast
- Persons on special diets
- Asthmatics without need of a nebulizer
- Persons with significant speech impediments
- Colostomy patients (who are self-reliant)

Special Needs Shelter Operational Protocol

- Upon shelter activation the shelter Captain/Co-captain will assure that all personnel know their assignments and are posted to their assigned areas.
- The Captain/Co-captain will also assure that all supplies and equipment are available and dispatched to the appropriate shelter areas.
- The Captain/Co-captain will inventory the supplies delivered to the shelter against the list of supplies in the plan and advise the EOC of items needed.
- The Safety Coordinator will assure safety personnel are assigned to all exit doors and that all required safety procedures are instituted for both the interior and premises of the building.
- Individuals and their caregivers will be registered upon admission using the appropriate forms.
- Medical staff must assess individuals admitted to the shelter at the time of admission to determine the appropriateness of the admission and the care needed.
- When indicated based on a large influx of arrivals at one time, triage procedures will be instituted.
- Individuals with “Don Not Resuscitate” orders will be identified with a red wrist bracelet. “DNR” will not appear on the bracelet.
- Shelter rules will be posted in English and Spanish with a copy given to each individual admitted to the shelter.
- Signs will be posted to identify shelter areas using the laminated signs provided in the shelter box.
- Client bed assignments are under the direction of the Team Leader assigned to each room and are based upon individual needs.
- Non-ambulatory and special care individuals must be assessed twice per shift.
- Non-medical staff will carry out duties under the supervision of medical staff.
- Caregivers will be responsible for the primary care of the Special Needs individuals the same as would be provided in the individuals’ home.
- Individuals admitted to the shelter and caregivers/family members will bring medications, personal hygiene items, and medical equipment/supplies to the shelter.
- Long Term Care facility Staff will be responsible for the care of their residents.
- Long Term Care Facility residents are to bring medications, personal hygiene items, and medical equipment/supplies to the shelter.
- Based upon need, individuals admitted to the shelter and /or their caregivers/family members will be given a toiletry kit containing tooth paste, tooth brush, soap, wash cloth, hand sanitizer, lotion, shampoo, deodorant, facial tissues, disposable razor, and shaving lotion.
- All staff are to maintain universal precautions.
- Non-medical staff must be instructed in universal precautions before performing tasks involving personal contact.
- Clean linens will be available in every room.

- Soiled linens will be kept out of sight and stored to prevent contamination until arrangements can be made for removal.
- Contaminated/soiled items are to be placed in plastic bags and disposed of in biohazard bags.
- Bedpans are to be covered with a towel and taken to the nearest bathroom.
- Upon discharge of a Special Needs individual, the appropriate discharge information will be recorded on the Individual, Valuables, and Durable Medical Equipment Registration form.

Census Data for Daily Report to the Emergency Operation Center

Shelter Location: _____ Date: _____

Shelter Coordinator: _____

Time Shelter Opened: _____

Number of Clients Served: _____

Number of Clients Transferred to Hospital: _____

Remarks:

Logistic Operations

Logistics Operations

The Emergency Special Needs Shelter will be operated under the direction of the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency through the Emergency Operations Center. The Shelter Coordinator will establish the shelter using the supply list outlined below. These supplies will be delivered to the Shelter Coordinator. As needed, the Shelter Coordinator will communicate with the EOC for any items that need to be re-supplied or additional logistics support to include meals for the Shelter Staff and patients.

Supply List

Emergency Special Needs-Medically Fragile Supply List

The Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency and /or Cerro Gordo County Public Health should prepare and store emergency supplies. In the event of an emergency incident that requires the opening of an emergency shelter, The Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency or Cerro Gordo County Public Health will assure the delivery of the supplies to the shelter locations. Equipment and supplies already on hand will not need to be delivered, but an accountability of the supplies used should be sent to the Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management Agency after the incident for reimbursement.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- 1 facsimile machine
- 1 photocopier
- 1 computer, lap top
- 1 printer
- 3 reams of copy paper
- 100 manila folders
- 1 dozen ink pens
- 1 dozen pencils
- 2 bottles of white out
- 5 boxes of facial tissue
- 1 first aid kit
- 2 rolls of adhesive, masking tape
- 2 rolls of adhesive, cellophane, dispenser, disposable
- 25 notepads, lined 8 1/2 by 11
- 100 document protectors-plastic
- 2 three ring binders 2"
- 2 three ring binders 3"
- 2 staplers
- 1 box of staples
- 1 pair of scissors
- 1 box of rubber bands
- 1 staple remover
- 100 envelopes-9 x 12
- 2 telephone books
- 1 pencil sharpener

2 file boxes, plastic
3 extension cords, 25'
3 extension cords 50'
2 surge protectors
1 post poster paper pad
1 box of paper clips
1 pkg file labels
30 garbage bags, 30 gallon
10 bio-hazard bags, red, 30 gallon
2 sharps containers
2 rolls of yellow caution tape
5 flashlights, with extra batteries
5 boxes 4x4 gauze
5 boxes 2x2 gauze
5 rolls, medical adhesive tape
5 boxes band-aides (100 count)
battery operated radio additional batteries
Ziploc style plastic re-closable bags (2boxes each of small, medium & large)
5 Universal Precautions placards
OTC acetaminophen
OTC antihistamines
OTC anti-diarrhea medication
OTC antacids