



# 2017 Hurricane Maria: Medical Reserve Corps Unit Activities



*Saving Lives. Protecting Americans.*

**ASPR**

This page intentionally left blank

# 2017 Hurricane Maria — Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Unit Activities

---

## Overview

Hurricane Maria became a hurricane on September 17, 2017, and quickly strengthened to a category 5 as it moved across the Atlantic Ocean towards the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. On September 20, Maria's status was lowered to a Category 4 hurricane with 155 mph winds as it made early morning landfall in Yabucoa Harbor, Puerto Rico. As the center of the storm moved into the island's interior, widespread force winds spread throughout Puerto Rico's mainland along with extremely heavy rainfall that produced catastrophic flash flooding. Maria's center moved over the coastal waters off northwestern Puerto Rico early that afternoon; however, tropical storm force winds continued into the evening and overnight hours across the mainland.<sup>1</sup>

Federal, territory, state, and local government and non-governmental partners worked together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from Hurricane Maria's significant impact, including widespread power outages. As of March 31, 2018, 14 Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units have reported participation in 48 preparedness, response, and recovery activities related to the hurricane. A total of 212 volunteers from these units provided a sum of 2,524 service hours for an estimated economic value of \$84,115. The majority of MRC activities related to Hurricane Maria response were performed by the MRC of Puerto Rico unit with volunteers being deployed to assist with patient transport, shelter support, and site visits to various locations that included clinical evaluations and public health education to community members. Other MRC units that were not directly impacted by the hurricane also supported the response by assisting with communications, patient transport, and providing services to evacuees.

To gather data for this summary report, MRC Program staff compiled and reviewed all self-reported MRC unit activities for the period of August 24, 2017 – March 31, 2018. It is important to note that at the time of writing this report, units are still engaged in recovery activities and those activities may not yet be captured.

It is the intent of this report to give an overview of the MRC network's actions during the peak activity of this event. Due to the local nature of the MRC, a true accounting of all of the events and activities is not possible at the Federal level.

---

<sup>1</sup> Information for this summary narrative was extracted from data provided publicly on the [National Weather Service's National Hurricane Center website](#).

## Summary of Reported Hurricane Maria Activities<sup>2</sup>

Hurricane	# of MRC Units	# of MRC Volunteers <sup>3</sup>	# of MRC Activities	# of Volunteer Service Hours	Estimated Total Economic Value
Maria	14	212	48	2,524	\$84,115

### MRC Unit Activities

#### Region 1

##### *Connecticut*

**MRC at Yale New Haven Center of Excellence (CoE)** (New Haven, CT). The unit assisted with receiving and welcoming individuals from Puerto Rico who were arriving in Connecticut as a result of Hurricane Maria. The group met direct flights from Puerto Rico two times a week for several weeks to assess needs, as well as distribute blankets, snacks, and informational materials.

##### *Massachusetts*

**Boston MRC** (Boston, MA). From November 3 to December 27, 2017, 59 volunteers supported pop-up centers and a shelter in the Greater Boston area to assist evacuees. Volunteers served 360 hours, assisting with call center support, translations, donation sorting, and data entry.

**Upper Merrimack Valley MRC** (Westford, MA). The unit received a request from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to assist with emergency shelters in Puerto Rico. The unit coordinator and volunteers expressed interest, but it was determined that the mission was not well-aligned with current response capabilities and deployment plans were discontinued.

**UMass Amherst MRC** (Amherst, MA). Twenty (20) MRC volunteers served 100 hours fundraising on campus, ultimately raising \$350 to donate to victims of Hurricane Maria.

---

<sup>2</sup> A number of MRC units throughout the network reported general hurricane-related activities such as maintaining hurricane situational awareness with volunteers; participating in partner meetings that discussed hurricane response; and conducting emergency preparedness outreach. These activities are not included in this summary table; however, a list of MRC units reporting such activities is included in Appendix A.

<sup>3</sup> The tally for volunteers listed in this table and on subsequent pages of this report may not necessarily reflect a unique individual volunteer count. For example, an MRC volunteer who participated in multiple response activities with his/her unit would be counted separately in each activity. Other data (e.g., number of units, number of volunteer service hours) are unduplicated counts.

## Region 2

### *New Jersey*

**Middlesex County MRC** (East Brunswick, NJ). Four (4) volunteers served 28 hours transporting pallets of relief supplies to the New Jersey National Guard for transport to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

### *New York*

**Livingston County MRC** (Mt. Morris, NY). The unit had 10 MRC volunteers serve a combined total of 27 hours managing a collection site for those impacted by the hurricane. Volunteers were responsible for item registration, sorting, moving, packing, and inventorying as well as breakdown of the site.

### *Puerto Rico*

**MRC of Puerto Rico** (San Juan, PR). Forty-eight (48) volunteers supported response and recovery efforts for Hurricane Maria, serving 322 hours. Volunteers performed medical evaluations of community members; hosted water management safety orientations; and distributed supplies such as food, Zika virus prevention kits, and mosquito repellent at site visits to 15 municipalities. In addition, volunteers assisted with the transfer of patients from the Puerto Rico Medical Center to the USNS Comfort.



**Figure 1: MRC of Puerto Rico volunteers conduct outreach activities and medical evaluations of community members in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria**

## Region 3

### *Pennsylvania*

**Philadelphia MRC** (Philadelphia, PA). From October 12 to December 22, 2017, 30 volunteers served 318 hours supporting a disaster assistance services center. The center was activated by the City of Philadelphia to provide information on available services (e.g., health and medical, housing, education, state benefit programs) for individuals displaced from Puerto Rico and other locations due to the hurricanes.

## Region 4

### *Alabama*

**Mobile MRC** (Mobile, AL). The unit coordinator supported disaster relief efforts by making and sending a care package for residents of Puerto Rico that included 200 hand sanitizers and 120 “Tube Kits” that contained personal hygiene essentials such as shampoo, a toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, and soap.

### *Florida*

**Central Florida MRC** (Orlando, FL). From October 18 to December 20, 2017, four MRC volunteers served 368 hours supporting operations at a disaster response center set up for evacuees from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Volunteers provided first aid assistance and information on available resources.

### *Georgia*

**Cobb/Douglas MRC** (Marietta, GA). Eight (8) volunteers served 52 hours supporting the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) and the Federal Communications Center (FCC) with hurricane response efforts.

### *Mississippi*

**Central Mississippi MRC** (Jackson, MS). Nine (9) volunteers assisted the Department of Veterans Affairs with the set-up of an NDMS Patient Reception Center at the Air National Guard Base in Flowood, MS, for the receiving of patients from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In addition, the unit supported the placement of patients received at the reception center. Volunteers served 720 hours.

### *North Carolina*

**Mid Carolina State Medical Assistance Team (SMAT)** (Chapel Hill, NC). Three (3) volunteers delivered soft structures to a logistical staging area for deployment within Region 4 in support of Hurricane Maria.

### *South Carolina*

**Midlands Public Health Reserve Corps** (Columbia, SC). Seven (7) volunteers supported NDMS in receiving patients from areas impacted by Hurricane Maria. Volunteers served as registered nurses in an administrative capacity, assisting physicians onsite. Volunteers served 203 hours.

## Appendix A

The following MRC units reported general hurricane-related activities, such as maintaining hurricane situational awareness with volunteers; participating in partner meetings that discussed hurricane response; and conducting emergency preparedness outreach.

### Region 1

- Wachusett MRC (Hubbardston, MA)

### Region 2

- Bergen County MRC (Hackensack, NJ)
- Camden County MRC (Blackwood, NJ)

### Region 3

- Chester County MRC (West Chester, PA)
- Greater Prince William MRC (Manassas, VA)
- Lord Fairfax Health District MRC (Winchester, VA)

### Region 4

- Calhoun-Cleburne MRC (Jacksonville, AL)
- Coastal Georgia MRC (Savannah, GA)
- MRC of West Georgia (LaGrange, GA)
- Clayton County MRC (Forest Park, GA)
- Clark County MRC (Winchester, KY)
- Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department (Chattanooga, TN)
- Upper Cumberland Tennessee Regional MRC (Cookeville, TN)

### Region 5

- Indiana State Board of Animal Health MRC (Indianapolis, IN)
- Washtenaw County MRC (Ypsilanti, MI)
- MRC of Freeborn County (Albert Lea, MN)

### Region 6

- Acadiana MRC (Lafayette, LA)

### Region 8

- Pueblo MRC (Pueblo, CO)
- Bear River MRC – Box Elder County (Brigham City, UT)
- Bear River MRC – Cache County (Logan, UT)
- Bear River MRC – Rich County (Logan, UT)