

**H1N1 and Seasonal Flu—**

It certainly does seem like the United States has been talking about H1N1 flu for a long time. Since the novel strain of flu made its appearance in April, the public health community has been actively monitoring the situation, planning for the care of the sick, vaccinating our most vulnerable citizens and educating the public to slow the spread.

Across the nation and the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Medical Reserve Corps has been active in working with local health departments to provide education, assist with vaccine distribution, staff call centers and provide administrative and clerical support.

The members of Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps have been very generous with time and expertise. During the month of October 2009, 28 active members (listed here on the right) gave over 310 hours of service to local health departments. Members assisted in seasonal flu clinics in health departments and schools. Members also assisted in preparing H1N1 packets for schools' parents and in H1N1 school clinics.

If a member has not yet been able to assist, there will be additional opportunities in the very near future. The local health departments will be returning to the public schools to dispense second doses of the H1N1 vaccine. As more and more vaccine is received, the health departments will call on the Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps for assistance. Continue to watch your e-mail and respond when you have the opportunity. **Thank you to everyone for your support and assistance to all of the communities in Southwest Virginia!**

Thank you!!!

- Reba Anderson
- Tina Balas
- Joyce Bassham
- Harry Brill
- Patricia Burton
- Sasha Calton
- Kaye Davis
- Marilyn Dee Genovese
- Judith Foster
- Patricia Frost
- Laken Garrett
- Brian Gravley
- Susan Hunnicutt
- Sheri Jessee
- Jeff Letchner
- Christina Millinger
- Andrew Morgan
- Betsy Perkins
- Joyce Perkins
- Todd Perkins
- Valerie Peyton
- Sheri Repass
- Yvonne Rhodes
- Lona Roberts
- Emily Stewart
- Sue Thayer
- Kristen Tracy
- Marty White



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The SWVA POINT News

New U. S. Surgeon General—On November 13, 2009, the SWVA MRC received the following announcement from Captain Rob Tosatto of the National MRC Office, "I am pleased to announce that Dr. Regina Benjamin was recently sworn in as our United States Surgeon General. VADM Benjamin will continue to support the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and our mission to promote a healthier and safer nation. Expect to hear from her soon!"

H1N1 Updates from Dr. Karen Remley, Virginia State Health Commissioner—Since the onset of the novel H1N1 flu strain, Virginia Health Commissioner Karen Remley has issued frequent "Dear Colleague" letters to clinicians and the health care community. If you have not received these letters or would like to read what has previously been released, the letters are posted on the SWVA MRC website at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/mrc/swvamrc/publications.htm>.

Virginia Volunteer Health System (VVHS) - The new volunteer application and management system, **VVHS**, was highlighted in the Winter 2009 newsletter which was published in February. During the course of this busy year, the Volunteer Coordinator has worked diligently to ensure that each member is approved and contact information is updated. VVHS is used to send out alerts and e-mails and manage all volunteer activities. The Volunteer Coordinator needs all SWVA MRC members to check their volunteer record at least once a quarter to make sure user names and passwords are remembered and changes to contact information are made. If you do not remember your user name or password, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible to have them reset.

As the SWVA MRC becomes more technologically adept, having a working e-mail address is critical to the unit's ability to send out information about alerts and volunteer requests. Please make sure your e-mail address and phone numbers are correct as soon as possible. If you need help in using VVHS, First Time User's instructions can be found on the Publication Page of the unit website. For questions or assistance, please call Kristina Morris at 276-274-0555

2009

It is hard to believe that 2009 is coming to a close so soon. The Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps has had a wonderful year and it is all because of the dedication and support of our members. Unit membership has increased to almost 900; assistance has been provided to local health departments with seasonal and H1N1 vaccine distribution; and members have participated in exercises, meetings, trainings and health fairs.

Thanks to each and every one of the SWVA MRC members for all you do to make this a unit which continues to grow, develop and serve.

Sincerely, Kristina Morris

FACEBOOK

As many members are aware, the Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps has a private group for active members on FACEBOOK. To be included in the group, it will be necessary to first become a friend of **Kristina Morris**, Volunteer Coordinator. If you are a FACEBOOK user, please send a Friend request to Kristina. The private group is another forum for providing breaking news on H1N1, seasonal flu, volunteer opportunities, pictures of volunteer activities, videos and training opportunities. FACEBOOK Users can also become **Fans** of the Virginia Medical Reserve Corps.

Rapid Orientation Podcast

The SWVA MRC is always looking for new and creative ways to involve busy health care professionals in the organization. With the assistance of Rich Charles of Virginia Tech, the SWVA MRC created a podcast to be used for Rapid Orientation of new applicants during H1N1 Season. The Podcast can be viewed at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/mrc/swvamrc/training.htm>. Current members are encouraged to view the podcast to refresh their original orientation and to share with others who might be interested in joining our unit.

MECC Recruitment

This fall, the SWVA MRC has been fortunate to have Andrew Morgan of Wise available to assist with the recruitment and orientation of new members from Mountain Empire Community College. Andrew joined the SWVA MRC on September 11th during a Serve America event at MECC.

With Andrew's assistance, 21 students and faculty from MECC and students from Lindsey Wilson College have joined the SWVA MRC.