

Survey on Michigan's Medical Reserve Corps Program
Submitted by Virginia Zimmerman

In February 2015, Regional Healthcare Coalition Coordinators (HCC), Local Health Department (LHD) Emergency Preparedness Coordinators (EPC), and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Coordinators were asked to complete a short Survey Monkey questionnaire distributed by the Office of Public Health Preparedness to assess program collaboration and emergency preparedness efforts of the MRC. Survey findings were consistent with anecdotal data and correlated well among all three participant groups. Key findings, specific to MRCs and LHDs, indicated the following:

- Large knowledge gaps exist between the programs.
- Frequency of communication (i.e., updates, invitations, and requests for assistance) was readily recognized by the MRCs, much less so by LHDs.
- MRCs have not been fully utilized, but are recognized to be very important for enhancing public health and preparedness response activities.
- Common leading indicators in the *effective use* of MRCs include a reliable/committed volunteer cadre, training, leadership support, and knowledge of the program.
- Common leading indicators on *barriers to the use* of MRCs include funding and awareness/knowledge of the program. Additionally, MRC recognized barriers include employed staff, liability/legal protections, training, volunteer diversity, and local level policy/guidance. LHD recognized barriers include competing priorities, leadership support, volunteer size or extent, and a reliable/committed volunteer cadre.
- Both programs would advocate for MRC involvement in activities.

These findings will direct strategic program activities to help affect program collaboration and emergency preparedness efforts going forward. It is expected that knowledge, communication and program collaboration efforts will have improved by June 2016, in comparison to the 2015 survey results.

For more information about the survey or MRC program, email Virginia Zimmerman at Zimmermanv@michigan.gov. MRC program information may also be found on-line at www.MedicalReserveCorps.gov.