

**ANNEX THIRTEEN**

**TOWN OF NAGS HEAD  
SPECIAL NEEDS OPERATIONS**

## **TOWN OF NAGS HEAD EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN SPECIAL NEEDS OPERATIONS**

### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this is to provide guidance and direction to special needs facility managers and agencies, which will result in increased safety for this specific population in the Town of Nags Head.

### **II. Situation and Assumptions**

#### **a. Situation:**

1. "Special Needs Population" refers to those citizens whose particular situation requires special consideration by emergency planners. Special needs individuals may or may not be institutionalized.
2. There are multiple facilities and agencies, which have responsibility for the safety of special needs populations. In the Dare County those agencies include Social Services, Health/Mental Health, Nursing Homes and Private Home Health Care Providers.
3. The local "special needs population" is very dynamic, just as the general population is continually changing. As patient confidentiality must be respected, it is incumbent on the facility managers and care agencies to maintain current contact numbers of the special needs population.
4. Certain hazards will necessitate either evacuation or shelter in place procedure. Hurricanes, chemical emergencies and fires are examples of such hazards. When evacuations are necessary, some individuals must be transported by car, bus or van.
5. The Dare County Emergency Medical Service have only a limited number of ambulances in which they are reserved primarily for emergency responses during any threat and thus, will not be available for special needs citizens. Therefore, the responsibility for securing transportation must be accepted by the special needs agencies and the responsibility must include planning for any necessary evacuation and relocation of the special needs individuals.
6. There is no identified "emergency special needs shelter" currently available in Dare County which will accommodate evacuees. Special Needs shelters will be available at Pitt County Memorial Hospital.

7. Shelter-in-place procedures are an alternative to evacuation in some circumstances. Facilities plans must address shelter-in-place situations, as well as evacuation procedures.
8. The Department of Public Safety is available to assist agencies in the planning process. All special needs facility emergency plans must be consistent with existing County/Town plans. Families providing care for special needs individuals may contact the Dare County Emergency Management Office for guidance on emergency preparations.
9. Facilities providing special needs care must arrange contingencies for emergency needs to include auxiliary power, ventilation/air conditioning, heat, medical supplies, suitable vehicles, linen and other such essentials as may be needed with the understanding that re-supply may be as long as 2 weeks.

b. Assumptions:

1. It is assumed that each special needs facility or agency has a current emergency action plan which includes procedures for evacuation, procurement of emergency transportation and patient care; it is also assumed that facilities will take the initiative to train staff and residents and inform families as needed.
2. A number of special needs individuals have caring family and friends who will assist them during times of emergency, thus relieving the burden on public agencies; it is assumed that care facilities and agencies will be aware of which special needs individuals will not need public assistance and that up-to-date accountability will be maintained.
3. Inevitably, there will be some individuals who will seek emergency assistance through the 911 system, who must be assisted by Dare County agencies within the limitations of the resources and confines of the Dare County and Town of Nags Head's Emergency Operations Plans. These cases may include individuals who are alone or an individual in the care of family members.
4. Sheltering-in-place at facilities may be the best option for certain situations where evacuations cannot be accomplished in a safe/timely manner.
5. It is assumed that various means of transportation other than ambulances will be available to support an evacuation of the special needs individuals. A minimum of 48 hours must be provided to the Dare County Director of Emergency Management to allow for transportation resource procurement.

6. It is assumed that some agreements currently exist between local facilities and facilities beyond the locality, which address the relocation of individuals and patients with special needs, especially with private health care facilities.
7. It is assumed that individuals being relocated will be responsible for medications and special equipment during transport to include sufficient staff to accompany patients to insure proper patient care.
8. At least annually, the special needs facility operations and agency heads will meet with the Emergency Management Director to review plans and procedures for emergencies. The review will include mutual aid agreements, memorandums of understanding and contracts developed between facilities, agencies, etc. to support emergency situations.

### III. Concept of Operations:

1. When emergencies threaten the area, the Dare County Emergency Management Director will provide notification to the special needs agencies and facilities in Dare County in sufficient time to allow for implementation of operational plans. Agencies, in turn, will be expected to notify individuals and families affected by the threat. Agencies, in turn, will be expected to notify individuals and families affected by the threat. Agencies and facilities will notify the Emergency Management Director of any problems that would threaten the successful implementation of operational plans.
2. Agencies and facility operators will implement emergency action plans in response to the disaster threat in accordance with established disaster plans.
3. For situations where public utilities have been severed, the Town of Nags Head will attempt to provide emergency resources to the facility as quickly as practical.
4. Public Information related to the situation will be provided through the Dare County Public Information Center. All agencies and special needs providers will attempt to coordinate outgoing emergency information through the Dare County Emergency Operations Center.
5. Each public and private facility or agency will designate an emergency point of contact for receipt of notification and other emergency information. When notified of a threat the designated facility contact will take appropriate action in accordance with the facility emergency plan.

6. In the extreme event that normal means of communication are lost to special needs facilities, the Emergency Management Director will attempt to provide an emergency means of communications by sources available. The objectives of such assistance will be a link to the 911 center or the emergency operations center until normal communications can be restored.
7. The following categories have been identified as special needs, but are not limited to:
  - a. Any ventilator dependent patients
  - b. Any patient who is airway dependent or suctioning
  - c. Patients with IV analgesia, hydration, infusion therapy
  - d. Diabetic patients requiring assistance with insulin
  - e. Patients requiring daily visits for wound care or injections
8. Memorandums of Understanding should be maintained and updated annually between health care facilities and special needs shelters.

# INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

## HANDOUT

### Preparing and Planning

If you or someone close to you has a disability or a special need, you may have to take additional steps to protect yourself and your family in an emergency.

Disability/Special Need	Additional Steps
Visually impaired	May be extremely reluctant to leave familiar surroundings when the request for evacuation comes from a stranger. A guide dog could become confused or disoriented in a disaster. People who are blind or partially sighted may have to depend on others to lead them, as well as their dog, to safety during a disaster.
Hearing impaired	May need to make special arrangements to receive warnings.
Mobility impaired	May need special assistance to get to a shelter.
Single working parent	May need help to plan for disasters and emergencies.
Non-English speaking persons	May need assistance planning for and responding to emergencies. Community and cultural groups may be able to help keep people informed.
People without vehicles	May need to make arrangements for transportation.
People with special dietary needs	Should take special precautions to have an adequate emergency food supply.
People with medical conditions	Should know the location and availability of more than one facility if dependent on a dialysis machine or other life-sustaining equipment or treatment.
People with mental retardation	May need help responding to emergencies and getting to a shelter.
<u>People with dementia</u>	Should be registered in the <u>Alzheimer's Association Safe Return Program</u>

If you have special needs: Find out about special assistance that may be available in your community. Register with the Dare County Office of Emergency Services for assistance so needed help can be provided.

### **Check for hazards in the home**

During and right after a disaster, ordinary items in the home can cause injury or damage. Anything that can move, fall, break or cause fire is a home hazard. Check for items such as bookcases, hanging pictures, or overhead lights that could fall in an earthquake or a flood and block an escape path.

### **Be ready to evacuate**

Have a plan for getting out of your home or building (ask your family or friends for assistance, if necessary). Also, plan two evacuation routes because some roads may be closed or blocked in a disaster.

- Create a network of neighbors, relatives, friends, and coworkers to aid you in an emergency. Discuss your needs and make sure everyone knows how to operate necessary equipment.
- Discuss your needs with your employer.
- If you are mobility impaired and live or work in a high-rise building, have an escape chair.
- If you live in an apartment building, ask the management to mark accessible exits clearly and to make arrangements to help you leave the building.
- Keep specialized items ready, including extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, catheters, medication, prescriptions, food for service animals, and any other items you might need.
- Be sure to make provisions for medications that require refrigeration.
- Keep a list of the type and model numbers of the medical devices you require.
- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets to identify your disability.
- Know the location and availability of more than one facility if you are dependent on a dialysis machine or other life-sustaining equipment or treatment.