



MARK B HORTON, MD, MSPH
Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

Dear Colleague:

This is to advise you that the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), in collaboration with California's 61 local health departments (LHDs), is enrolling all licensed acute care hospitals in the California Health Alert Network (CAHAN). The California Hospital Association (CHA) is supportive of this effort. CAHAN, the State of California's official health emergency alerting system, is a secure web-based alerting and notification system that facilitates alerting, collaboration, emergency planning, and response communication among hospitals and other healthcare providers, federal, state, local health departments, and other public health emergency partners.

Once enrolled, hospitals will have the ability to receive and confirm CAHAN alerts in minutes from state and local government during emergencies, urgent events, disasters, and transmit relevant information about emergency issues to public health and medical partners. CAHAN alerts are accessible via alphanumeric pager, email, fax, cellular and landline phones on a 24/7/365 basis. In addition to alerts, CAHAN also provides a central collaborative work environment for health and medical emergency partners to securely share and store confidential and sensitive information. CDPH can use CAHAN to send documents such as All Facility Letters (AFLs) from CDPH's Licensing and Certification Division, and advisories from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Currently, over 12,000 participants from many public and private organizations are enrolled in CAHAN. Some local health departments have already enrolled hospitals in their jurisdiction in CAHAN. However, in order to ensure that CDPH's Licensing and Certification Division can communicate with all California hospitals and to facilitate quick and efficient alerting within a single hospital, hospitals throughout a region, or hospitals throughout the state, CDPH will enroll a consistent Hospital Role Structure (See Enclosure A). Providing the Licensing and Certification Division with this alerting capability does not change the SEMS (State Emergency Management System) structure, the role of the Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator (MHOAC), or local responsibility to manage disasters. However, it is important that Licensing and Certification have the ability to communicate through a secure electronic environment with the healthcare facilities it licenses.

We are asking each hospital to use the Hospital Role Structure shown in Enclosure A. There are two categories within the Hospital Role Structure: Priority and Supplemental Roles. The use of Priority Roles is primarily for disasters and Supplemental Roles are for a catastrophic or lengthy event. The use of standard roles throughout all hospital facilities will allow for alerts and notifications to be sent to appropriate staff on a statewide basis in a more efficient manner. Each facility can create additional roles to better meet their needs for internal alerting, notifications, and for use with drills and exercises.

Each hospital facility should designate a primary and backup representative who will work with us to enroll your facility. You will need to provide your representatives with the names for each priority role in the Hospital Role Structure.

CDPH's Emergency Preparedness Office, which administers CAHAN, will provide three-hour CAHAN expansion workshops throughout the State at no charge. We encourage representatives from the California Hospital Association, Licensing and Certification, local health departments, and hospitals to attend the CAHAN expansion workshops. Participants will learn how to receive and confirm an alert and use CAHAN to enhance statewide communications among emergency and public health partners. Workshops will begin in May and will be offered throughout the state on a regional basis through August. Please see Enclosure B for the month we will offer workshops in your area. All workshop participants can view the workshop schedule and register at cahanworkshops.com. If you are unavailable to attend a workshop in your area or it is full, consider attending any of the other workshops.

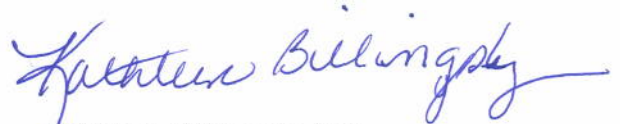
Thank you in advance for your participation in this important effort that will assist with public health preparedness for the people of California by ensuring immediate alerting and notification is available between public health partners.

If you have any questions or would like more information about this effort, please email CAHANInfo@cdph.ca.gov or contact Gigi Scott, CAHAN Unit Chief, at 916-319-8182.

Sincerely,



Elisabeth H. Lyman
Deputy Director
Public Health Emergency Preparedness



Kathleen Billingsley, RN
Deputy Director
Center for Healthcare Quality

Enclosures

- A – Hospital Role Structure
- B – CAHAN Training Workshop Schedule

cc: California Hospital Association
CDPH Licensing and Certification Branch Chiefs
CDPH Licensing and Certification District Managers
CDPH Laboratory Field Services Supervisors
Medical Health Operational Area Coordinators (MHOACs)
Regional Disaster Medical Health Specialists (RDMHSs)
Regional Disaster Medical Health Coordinators (RDMHCs)
Local Public Health Officers
County Health Executives/Directors
Emergency Medical Services Agencies (EMSA)
Local Emergency Medical Services Agencies (LEMSAs)
Local Hospital Preparedness Program Coordinators
Health Alert Network (HAN) Coordinators