

Region 5 Health and Medical Mitigation Plan

Cascade Regional Blood Services, in conjunction with seven other health and medical organizations, is participating in the development of the Region 5 (Pierce County) Health and Medical Mitigation Plan. Once the plan is adopted by the blood center's board of directors and approved by Washington State Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, our organization will be eligible for Pre and Post Disaster Hazard Mitigation Funds from the Federal Government.

Hazard Mitigation is defined as "those actions taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to people, property, social infrastructure, or the environment from hazards and their effects." This could involve such projects as relocating buildings out of a floodplain to seismically retrofitting buildings.

Pierce County Department of Emergency Management is responsible for the coordination and development of the Plan. The Plan must be completed by late fall of 2010. MultiCare Health System received a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program; hence the fiscal impact to our organization will be minimal.

The Plan has the following sections: a Profile Section, a Risk Assessment Section, a Capability Identification Section, a Mitigation Strategy Section, and a Plan Maintenance Section. There is also an ongoing Public Involvement process that is documented throughout the planning project. Currently, the Profile Sections have been completed and the Capability Identification Sections are almost complete. We will be moving into the Mitigation Strategy Section next where we identify those measures that could improve facilities and improve life safety in medical structures. The Planning Teams will be holding public comment meetings mid-year on the hazards and vulnerabilities that have been identified.

For further information, visit the plan website at www.co.pierce.wa.us/mitigation or contact Diane Schurr, Mitigation Planner at the Pierce County Department of Emergency Management, at (253) 798-2217, dschurr@co.pierce.wa.us. The blood center's contact is Kat Wingers, kathleenw@crbs.net.