



Support Guide

Background: The North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services (NCOEMS) has the responsibility for emergency mass patient movement as part of the Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8 for the NC State Emergency Response Team (NC SERT). State Medical Support Shelter (SMSS) patient movement is coordinated by the NCOEMS Support Cell.

Goal: Increased efficiency for patient movement due to the need for evacuation from a residence to an SMSS because of an anticipated or unexpected incident.

Purpose: To assist in the coordination for the transfer of patients that need to be moved from a residence due to an incident that has impacted the ability to care for those patients in their normal environment.

Incident Types:

1. Anticipated: Incident that is expected to occur **greater than 24 hours' notice**, allowing time to deliberately plan, identify, triage and link patients with appropriate placement (e.g., Hurricane, Flooding, Winter Storm).
2. Unexpected: Incident that occurs with **less than 24 hours' notice**, allowing minimal to no time to deliberately plan, identify, triage and link patients with appropriate placement (e.g., Fire, Tornado, Nuclear).

SMSS Patient Movement Criteria:

Criteria that **meet** potential statewide patient movement coordination:

1. An individual that is evacuating their home pre/post incident and requires 24/7 medical care to maintain their normal level of health and meets the "SMSS Placement Guidance" criteria.
2. Potential or real impact to multiple counties requiring assistance transferring patients from a residence to a SMSS.
3. Other needs on a case-by-case basis.

Process:



➤ Notify:

- Local Emergency Management makes healthcare coalition aware of consideration/need for patient movement support for a SMSS.
- Requests for support should occur as soon as possible but at least 96 hours prior to anticipated impact when possible.

➤ Planning Form Completion:

- County Department (EM, DSS, EMS, PH etc.) completes a Patient Movement Planning Form to indicate potential number of patients needing movement. If the



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situation is unexpected and evacuation needs to occur immediately, patient movement should begin and in lieu of the planning form, a call should be placed to the Healthcare Coalition for additional support and notification to the ESF8 Lead.

- Activation Decision:
 - Planning forms are reviewed by the ESF8 Lead in conjunction with DHHS & NCEM Leadership to determine if/when a State Medical Support Shelter will be established.
- Patient Placement
 - Sending county submits information to the ESF8 Support Cell on each individual patient by completing the individual patient placement form or the bulk patient upload process. Patients should be informed, prepared, and ready for patient movement to any location the SMSS has been setup upon submission.
 - Patient forms are reviewed for placement by ESF8 staff.
 - The ESF8 Support Cell will contact sending entity once disposition of patient has been determined.
 - Sending entities should be prepared to help facilitate taking back the patient once situation has stabilized and their home location has been verified as safe to return.
 - Process can be shut down at any point based on severe weather conditions or ESF8 Lead recommendation.
- Patient Transportation:
 - Coordination of transportation should primarily be determined by the sending county. If counties are unable to arrange transportation resources, then ESF8 will **attempt** to coordinate transportation assets.

Additional questions can be directed to your Regional Healthcare Coalition or to the ESF8 Support Cell (OEMSSupportCell@dhhs.nc.gov).

The most updated patient movement forms and documents can be found at <https://hpp.nc.gov/> under Resources, in the Internal Response Resource section, password required.