



# Leading Your Department & Team Through Crisis

## The Importance of Disaster Response Plans

MANAGEMENT CONNECTION



Having a comprehensive plan in place to respond to emergencies is critical

The healthcare industry is expected to stay open for business despite disasters or emergencies that may occur, whether they are natural, biological, local states of emergency, or anything in-between. As foodservice managers and professionals, we are asked to rise to the occasion and take control of whatever situation we face. As our overall responses to these disasters change, it becomes ever more imperative that we have comprehensive plans in place, and can enact them at a moment's notice.

As CDM, CFPPs, we must ensure that we've got a response plan ready for any type of incident. Response plans need to cover all aspects of your operation, from food receiving, storage, preparation, and serving; to staffing plans, which should correspond with the serving plan and include enough staff for

before, during, and after the event; and how to ensure that we are keeping our staff, clients, and visitors safe.

The time to prepare for any type of disaster is now. If you are new to a facility, look for the disaster plan and familiarize yourself with it. Make any adjustments you deem necessary. Every good disaster plan considers many factors, which should include:

1. Location of the facility and what natural disasters are most likely to affect your area (hurricanes, flooding, tornados, snowstorms, earthquakes, wildfires, mudslides, etc.). Are you in an evacuation zone?
2. The facility's role in community involvement if disaster strikes (feeding outside entities, acting as a shelter, etc.).



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3. The total capacity of the facility, to determine amount of food needed on hand.
4. The emergency utilities the facility has available (generators, water tanks, portable refrigeration/ freezer units).
5. The impact of a specific disaster on the ability to serve safe food, obtain food from suppliers, and what should be inventoried for emergency use.

Once you have determined the types of disasters and emergencies that could strike, look specifically at how your department would respond. For example, if a weather-related event occurred and you lost power, what would be the short- and long-term impact on the operation? The goal for any operator should always be to continue serving meals without interruption and know the best course of action, depending on the circumstance.

To help you determine your best response plan, develop an SBAR (Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation) or a CER (Cause, Effect, Resolution) Statement. One or both documents should outline exactly what the possible cause of interruption of daily operations might be, the impact it would have on your operation, and the

resolution, or what you would do to ensure that service continues. Mission critical for all foodservice operators—especially CDM, CFPPs—is to ensure that all of our patients and residents are provided with the nourishment they need at regular intervals.

When writing your SBAR or CER Statement, consider several things:

1. Determine all best- and worst-case scenarios based on the disaster you identified earlier, i.e. loss of power, loss of a resource such as natural gas, equipment failure, etc.
2. Determine what your action would be for each scenario. Be as specific as possible with your response to how your operation might be affected. For example, if you lose power, what type of refrigeration and cooking equipment would you have?
3. Determine what your resolution would be, based on your cause and effect. Using the above scenario of no power and loss of cooking equipment, how would you modify your meal service to ensure you are providing safe food to your clients and staff? This section should be your most detailed and specific, so even if someone had never stepped foot in your kitchen before, they would

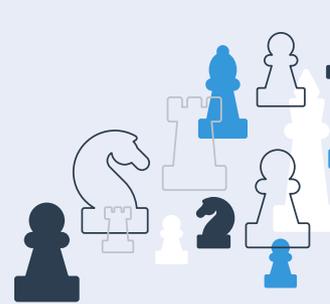
know what actions to take in that scenario. The best way to think of this is, “If I was not here and the power went out, what would the staff do, besides call me at home?”

When creating your plans, remember to talk with your vendors. Besides having contact with your primary vendor, you should have all of your secondary vendors’ order guides and know what is available to you, outside of the usual items you may get from your prime vendors. For example, if you obtain water from your primary vendor and are suddenly unable to order water from them, look to your secondary vendors to provide water, even if it is in a different size. If you have only one or two vendors, it’s best to look for alternate vendors and set up accounts now, instead of waiting until disaster strikes. Best practice is to have updated disaster orders on file with all your vendors.

Normally, many of us focus on only the true emergency goods, such as dried milk powder, crackers, water, and other nonperishable items. However, your emergency plan should consider other needs beyond a typical disaster, such as the needs revealed during this COVID-19 pandemic.

One thing we have all learned is that this pandemic changes

*Continued on page 19*



# SBAR and CER Statement Examples

Figure 1: SBAR—Situation/Background/Assessment/Recommendation

TITLE & OBJECTIVE				DATE
<b>STAKEHOLDERS</b>				
VP/Administrator: Nutrition Services Manager/CDM: Liaison:				
<b>SITUATION / BACKGROUND / ASSESSMENT / RECOMMENDATION (SBAR)</b>				
<b>SITUATION:</b> (A concise statement of the problem) Focus on WHY we are in this situation—use data, experience, quality/safety, and financial pieces				
<b>BACKGROUND:</b> (Pertinent and brief information related to the situation)				
<b>ASSESSMENT:</b> (Analysis and consideration of options—what you found/think)				
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> (Action requested/recommended—what you want)				
<b>RESOURCES</b>				
Supporting Comment(s):				
<b>SBAR REVISION HISTORY</b>				
Meeting	Date	Status Prior	Status Post	Results

Figure 2: CER—Cause, Effect, Resolution

CAUSE, EFFECT, RESOLUTION (CER)			
<b>Purpose/Explanation:</b> A one-sheet document where possible scenarios you might encounter or be faced with are listed along with their effect/impact on your facility and then the resolution you should seek to implement, along with any resources that you can refer to or reference for leading practice.			
Cause	Effect	Resolution	Source
List the issue that would exist, for example, loss of power.	What effect would the cause have on the operation, for example, without power we cannot cook.	What would be the solution to the cause and effect. How would you fix the situation?	List the source, regulation, or resource to support the cause, effect, and resolution.

by the hour. We are seeing limits in supply chain, from paper goods to everyday items such as cleaning wipes. This is why it's best to have a robust emergency order (or several orders) in with your suppliers for scenarios like COVID-19, where we are not sure of the restrictions to come.

A good emergency plan has all the following details included, and the response (as outlined in your SBAR or CER Statement) to the following:

1. Staffing needs for a crisis. Will staff have to stay on site? Will there be rotating shifts? Possible staff layoffs?
2. Potential disruptions in the food supply chain. What if vendors cannot get food to you or stock is unavailable due to shortage? What if vendors are prohibited from coming on site? Or they shut down due to economic conditions?
3. Facility shut down or evacuation. What should you do if your facility is vacated or closed?

4. Potential isolation or quarantine situations that might prevent normal operations. If your facility is locked down, how will staff arrive and depart?
5. Communication channels determined. How will you communicate to staff and set expectations during the disaster? How should they keep up with changing circumstances taking place as the situation unfolds?
6. Log what you do daily. This journal should detail every concern, change, communication, etc. that occurred during the event. Make adjustments to your emergency plan after everything is over to convey best practices for future events.

Now is the time to prepare for any potential type of disaster or service disruption. Once an incident occurs, it is too late to plan. Your emergency plans should be updated on a regular basis. The current pandemic has taught us much, and will undoubtedly impact our disaster plan. Practice (simulate) various scenarios with your teams at least once a year, and review everyone's specific response. **E**

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# What COVID-19 and Other Emergencies Teach Us



**THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS TAUGHT US MANY NEW LESSONS** on how to handle disasters, and we continue learning how to adjust our business models to handle the ongoing change in situations.

Maintaining contact with vendors and staying on top of the facility's response plans (restricting visitors, closing dining rooms, changing how meal service is delivered to patients and residents) have all been top priorities. We've learned that the best-written facility disaster plans probably did not cover the uniqueness of the COVID-19 outbreak, specifically in handling isolation and quarantine and having to modify

meal service frequently based on CDC guidelines.

Having daily conference calls and huddles with the team, and including your vendors and business partners, as well as looking at listservs (like ANFPConnect) for guidance on what other organizations are doing, have helped improve response.

In an ever-changing world, it is imperative that we modify our operations to be ready for every situation we may face. COVID-19 has reinforced our need to be prepared for any emergency scenario that comes our way.



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This Level II article assumes that the reader has a foundation of basic concepts of the topic. The desired outcome is to enhance knowledge and facilitate application of knowledge to practice.

**CBDM** continuing competence  
where education advances performance

Reading *Leading Your Department & Team Through Crisis: The Importance of Disaster Response Plans* and successfully completing these questions online has been approved for 1 hour of continuing education for CDM, CFPPs. CE credit is available ONLINE ONLY. To earn 1 CE hour, access the online CE quiz in the ANFP Marketplace. Visit [www.ANFPonline.org/market](http://www.ANFPonline.org/market) and select “CE Articles.” If you don’t see your article title on the first page, then search the title “*Leading Your Department & Team Through Crisis: The Importance of Disaster Response Plans.*” Once on the article title page, purchase the article and complete the CE quiz.

1. Disaster response plans need to cover the following aspects of your foodservice operation:
  - A. Food receiving, storage, preparation, serving
  - B. Staffing plans
  - C. Both of the above
2. The acronym SBAR stands for
  - A. Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation
  - B. Safety, Behavior, Attitude, Reassessment
  - C. Sanitation, Background, Attitude, Realignment
3. The acronym CER stands for
  - A. Clear, Effort, Response
  - B. Cause, Effect, Resolution
  - C. Care, Evolution, Recommendation
4. The SBAR or CER Statement should outline
  - A. Possible causes of interruption in operations
  - B. The impact the interruption would have on your operation
  - C. Both of the above
5. When creating your disaster response plan, consider the following in terms of your vendors
  - A. Assume that your primary vendor will meet all of your needs
  - B. Consult with your primary vendor and retain order guides for secondary vendors
  - C. Confirm that your vendor can provide at least one meal after disaster strikes
6. A good emergency plan should
  - A. Address compensation for your staff
  - B. Discuss vacation time for your employees
  - C. Include many disaster scenarios and your response to each
7. COVID-19 has taught us
  - A. We need to revisit and reassess our disaster plan after the pandemic
  - B. We need to communicate clearly and frequently with our stakeholder groups
  - C. Both of the above

Pride in **Foodservice** Week  
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Proud ★ Dedicated ★ Celebrated

**CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

February 3-7 was designated Pride in Foodservice Week by ANFP in 2020. Each year, this week of recognition applauds nutrition and foodservice professionals and other members of the dietary team for their hard work and dedication on the job.

At the end of Pride in Foodservice Week, participants were encouraged to submit a contest application which explained the fun, creative, and inspirational ways they celebrated their foodservice teams and the impact it had on staff and residents.

Five contest winners were awarded credit to the ANFP Marketplace. **Beth Rosenberger** received the first place prize of \$100 ANFP Marketplace credit.

**Polyn Sewell** received second place and \$50 ANFP Marketplace credit. **Brenda Austin, CDM, CFPP, Candice Pinta, CDM, CFPP, and Debi Canfield, CDM, CFPP** each received \$25 ANFP Marketplace credit for third, fourth, and fifth place.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR’S WINNERS!**

Learn about our 2021 Pride in Foodservice Week at [www.ANFPonline.org/PIFSW](http://www.ANFPonline.org/PIFSW).

