

## A Message from the Director

November 2019

Greetings to all! The Granite State Health Care Coalition continues to grow as it enters the “terrible twos” of the development phase. With this phase comes a few struggles as we work to include more partners and chart a course for future development. I look at the “terrible twos” of this coalition as a developmental phase that will ultimately make our coalition stronger! There are many important things to be done that only as a collective can be accomplished at the highest level. We will experience rapid growth and with that some growing pains as we adjust the pace to provide the greatest good for all.

Here is my ask of you:

- Please reach out and let us know how we can help
- Help us learn new skills and develop our independence
- We cannot see around corners, but with your guidance will safely navigate new roads
- If you do not hear or see us, it does not mean we are neglecting you but that we are working with other partners
- Please point out obstacles so we can learn from your experience

Let us foster an environment of growth where information is shared, personal and organizational development is encouraged, and open discussions occur to better the GSHCC for all! Help us, help you!



**Scott Nichols**  
*Director*



**Shaylin Deignan**  
*Program Coordinator*

## SAVE THE DATE : MAY 19, 2020 Granite State Health Care Coalition Conference

Join colleagues in a day of networking, learning, and collaboration at the 2020 Granite State Health Care Coalition Conference at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord, NH. The 2019 Granite State Health Care Coalition Conference was such a great success, and the goal is to engage even more partners in 2020. National speakers have already been secured, and more topics and speakers will be added to build out an enticing range of options for attendees. Registration information will be available in early 2020.

**For more information:** [email GSHCC Program Coordinator, Shaylin Deignan](#)

[Download the 2020 Save the Date flyer](#)



## Staff Update – New Exercise & Training Officer

The Granite State Health Care Coalition is pleased to announce that Chelsea St. George has started her journey in the newly created position of Exercise and Training Officer. Chelsea brings high energy and a desire to excel at everything she does. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Pre-Medical and Health Studies and a Master of Public Health Degree from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences in Boston, Massachusetts. Her recent experiences as the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and Emergency Management Coordinator for the City of Nashua helps broaden our knowledge and experience in the public health side of healthcare. Through these roles, she has a garnered experience in coalition building and maintenance as well as exercise building, design, and implementation.

Chelsea began her journey with the GSHCC on October 24, 2019, and her energy level, confidence, knowledge, work ethic, and drive will be a great asset to the team! Chelsea can be reached at [cstgeorge@healthynh.org](mailto:cstgeorge@healthynh.org) or 603-415-4298.



## Granite State Health Care Coalition General Meeting

On October 29<sup>th</sup>, the Granite State Health Care Coalition hosted an inaugural General Meeting at the New Hampshire Fire Academy with nearly 80 partners in attendance ([download Executive Summary here](#)).

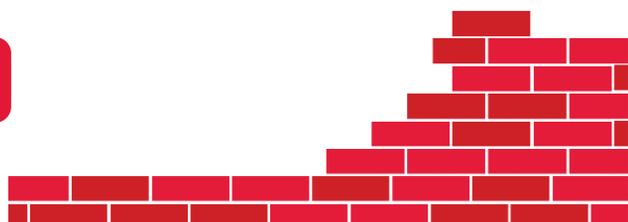
Attendees were provided with an overview of GSHCC initiatives, deliverables, and membership benefits. Partners from public health, Emergency Medical Services, emergency management, hospitals, long-term care, dialysis, home health, hospice care, Federally Qualified Health Centers, mental and behavioral health, and state employees were able to network and brainstorm in discipline-specific breakout groups to promote inter-agency collaboration, identify needs, and discuss opportunities for the Granite State Health Care Coalition to support its members. Many attendees also took advantage of a guided tour of the State of New Hampshire Emergency Operations Center.

*Thank you, Director Jennifer Harper for arranging this tour!*

## Membership with the Granite State Health Care Coalition

All partners are valued Granite State Health Care Coalition general members, but part of the mission of the GSHCC is to garner formal support, encourage collaborative approaches to information and resource sharing, and support continuity of healthcare service delivery. To establish a membership structure, the GSHCC is encouraging general members to become supporting members of the Coalition with a signed Letter of Support. Supporting members are eligible for additional benefits beyond what is extended to general members, including more specific technical assistance, exercise evaluation assistance, and more intensive educational opportunities. Please see the [GSHCC Letter of Support template](#) and [Member Benefits](#) information.

*Enhancing the Coalition through Collaboration  
Learn more today about GSHCC Membership*



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## New Hampshire Transitions to Juvare Healthcare Incident Management System

The State of New Hampshire has acquired a suite of products from Juvare to enhance capabilities and interoperability with healthcare incident management and the State's emergency management platform. The State has completed its first round of facility administrator training with Juvare, providing training to 78 people representing 28 healthcare facilities and 11 public health networks across the state. The introductory administrator training taught users the basics of utilizing the system and how to begin transitioning to and implementing the platform for incident management. More in-depth and topic-specific training will be scheduled in the coming months to include: user creation, status updates, incident management, and planning guide development.

The new system has improved system status overview with EMResource creating a statewide healthcare dashboard in the system that can track bed numbers, facility status, as well as communicate pertinent messaging. The eICS program serves as a platform for staff notifications and translates emergency plans into operational objectives. The EMTrack application provides a platform for systemwide patient tracking in a variety of events while protecting patient data and maintaining HIPAA compliance.

For more information about any Juvare products or if you would like to schedule a facility training, please contact Craig Beaulac from the DHHS ESU at [Craig.Beaulac@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:Craig.Beaulac@dhhs.nh.gov) or 603-271-9516.

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### ***Partner Testimonial – Cheshire Medical Center***

“As a person new to emergency management that experienced a significant real event, I can say working with the GSHCC has been beneficial in numerous ways. During Cheshire’s evacuation, GSHCC was able to help facilitate information flow and assist in obtaining resources. Additionally, they have provided a great opportunity for me to network with other Hospital Emergency Management Coordinators (HEMCs) in the state and grow my knowledge base. The education and resources the GSHCC are able to provide are valuable for all HEMCs and particularly for those who may lack opportunities or come from small organizations. Members of the coalition have come to our hospital to help with training our staff as we did not have the bandwidth to provide the entire training. I am grateful for the GSHCC and feel confident with their continued growth and support New Hampshire will be able to respond in times of need.”

*- Jessica Lussier, Director of Emergency Services, Cheshire Medical Center*



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## Vaping-Associated Lung Injury Identified in New Hampshire

As of November 5, 2019, 2,051\* cases of e-cigarette, or vaping, product use associated lung injury (EVALI) have been reported to CDC from 49 states (all except Alaska), the District of Columbia, and 1 U.S. territory; 79% of patients are under 35 years old. On October 7, 2019, NH DHHS issued a health alert on vaping-associated lung illness in New Hampshire. New Hampshire has identified its first probable case of vaping-associated lung injury consistent with national case definitions.

Nationally, most patients with vaping-associated lung injury reported using THC products (with or without nicotine products). The THC products were often obtained from informal sources. Not all cases report THC use, and a specific chemical cause has not yet been identified. No one compound or ingredient has emerged as the cause of these illnesses to date, and it may be that there is more than one cause of this outbreak. Many different substances and product sources are still under investigation. While it appears that vitamin E acetate is associated with EVALI, evidence is not yet enough to rule out contribution of other chemicals of concern to EVALI.

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/alerts/documents/vaping-lung-injury-nh.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/pdfs/mm6839e1-H.pdf>

[https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html#latest-outbreak-information](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html#latest-outbreak-information)

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## NH MMRS – Information & Recruitment

### New Hampshire Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) – Task Force 1

The Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) – Medical Task Force 1 is a self-contained unit of volunteer doctors, nurses, pharmacists, paramedics, EMTs, mental health professionals and non-medical personnel who are available to respond statewide with the primary mission of providing medical support during emergencies including; mass casualty, hazardous materials, public health events, and assisting health care agencies during surge events. The Task Force is a resource under the direction of the NH Department of Health and Human Services and has partnerships with the Maine MMRS Task Force to provide mutual assistance if needed.

Please contact NH MMRS Commander, Aaron McIntire at [Aaron.McIntire@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:Aaron.McIntire@dhhs.nh.gov) if you would like more information on how the team can assist your organization. If you are interested in becoming a team member, please visit <https://www.nhresponds.org/>

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## National Ebola Training & Education Center (NETEC):

### *Biopreparedness: Identify, Isolate, Inform*

Thank you to those that participated in the National Ebola Training and Education Center (NETEC) course on October 9<sup>th</sup> at the NH Fire Academy. This course encompassed the many phases of High Threat Infectious Disease preparedness. The focus of the training included how to identify and isolate patients with Ebola, or other High Threat Infectious Diseases, as well as how to notify officials while continuing to provide the necessary care at frontline facilities until the patient is transferred to an assessment facility. For more information please visit the NETEC website <https://netec.org>.

## We Want to Hear from You!

Do you have emergency preparedness resources that your organization has developed to improve preparedness and response? Would you be willing to share these resources with colleagues through the Coalition? The Granite State Health Care Coalition is soliciting resources, including decision guides, plan templates, policies, procedures, and exercise templates that have been developed to share through our online resource repository (currently under development). Please submit any documents you are willing to share with GSHCC Program Coordinator, Shaylin Deignan at [sdeignan@healthynh.org](mailto:sdeignan@healthynh.org).

## New Hampshire Statewide Training and Exercise Program (STEP)

*You Asked. We Listened! The statewide emergency preparedness centralized event calendar has arrived.*

The New Hampshire Statewide Training and Exercise Program (STEP) is pleased to announce the arrival of two exciting, new resources for collaboration with public health, healthcare, and behavioral health partners:

- Emergency Preparedness STEP Newsletter
- Centralized Event Calendar

The goal of these resources is to make information about training and exercises taking place within the state more easily accessible, timely and local for you! The newsletter and calendar feature information about upcoming trainings, exercises, webinars, conferences, and other events across our state all in one place, making searching for learning opportunities time-saving and simple. In addition to featuring event information, the newsletter also includes announcements about existing and new guidance, tools, and resources from federal, state, and local partners.

We invite you to take advantage of these resources at no cost to you. ***Subscribe to the STEP Newsletter and visit the Statewide Training and Exercise Calendar*** to see what is happening across the state. We encourage you to save the page to your web browser 'favorites' so you don't miss another event, announcement, or resource!

Then stay tuned for more enhancements to these new resources; where the next phase will include additional features, such as access to the event calendar via iOS & Android Apps and local administrator access.

**Questions?** Contact Adnela Alic, the NH Department of Health and Human Services Training & Exercise Coordinator, at the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program by phone at (603) 271-7499 or email [Adnela.Alic@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:Adnela.Alic@dhhs.nh.gov).



## An Update from the Greater Monadnock Public Health Region

The Greater Monadnock Public Health Region has been busy offering community education and trainings, conducting Hepatitis A vaccination clinics, and facilitating meetings. Multiple training opportunities have been scheduled, including Heart Saver First Aid, Stay and Go-Bag trainings, and Youth Mental Health First Aid Training. The region also holds monthly Hepatitis A vaccination clinics in partnership with the Phoenix House Keene and Dublin, Keene Serenity Center, and Sobriety Centers of New Hampshire.

The Public Health Emergency Coordinating Committee (PHECC) and Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Alliance (HEPA) groups have also been reestablished in the region. Both groups meet on a bi-monthly basis. The mission of the PHECC is to coordinate health-related emergency planning, preparedness, and response for the Greater Monadnock Public Health Region and to act as the hub for information exchange and problem-solving for agencies addressing critical health issues. Together, the group will collaborate, facilitate trainings, arrange for guest speakers, and engage in at least one tabletop per year.

The mission of the Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Alliance (HEPA) is to coordinate healthcare facility emergency planning, preparedness, and response for the Greater Monadnock Public Health Region. This is achieved through collaboration between other healthcare entities in the region and the exchange of information to address healthcare issues. Both groups meet on a bi-monthly basis.

For more information please visit <https://healthymonadnock.org/>

## NH Disaster Transportation Decision Guide for Healthcare Facilities

The GSHCC partnered with subject matter experts and formed a workgroup tasked with the development of the ***NH Disaster Transportation Decision Guide for Healthcare Facilities***. The purpose of the decision guide is to aid in the process of determining the optimal transportation option based on patient or resident acuity. This document is intended for use in conjunction with an organization's EMS provider or EMS Transportation Officer. The visual design of the *NH Disaster Transportation Decision Guide for Healthcare Facilities* is meant to serve as a job aid during an evacuation or large-scale event. Available resources could alter transportation decision making processes and may require EMTALA waivers be obtained.

The workgroup feels the guide provides a good overview of transportation options and encourages healthcare organizations to discuss actions, roles, and responsibilities with emergency and non-emergency ambulance providers. Proper preparation and understanding are essential to achieving a better outcome!

For more information, or to access this document in a different format, please contact GSHCC Director, Scott Nichols at [snichols@healthynh.org](mailto:snichols@healthynh.org) or 603-415-4299.

[Download the Disaster Transportation Guide](#)



## What is the Laboratory Response Network?

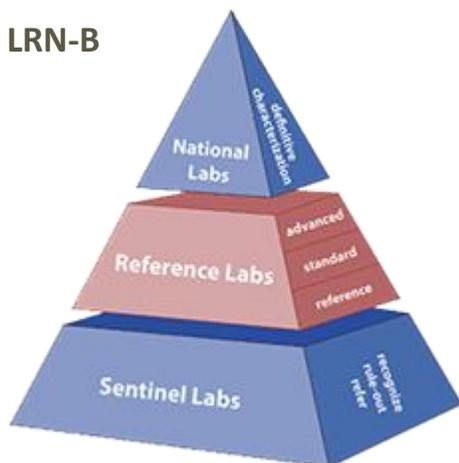
The Laboratory Response Network (LRN) was established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 1999 as a tiered framework for national preparedness and response. Since its inception, the LRN has grown, integrating an expanded network of laboratories both nationally and internationally for detection of biological threats, emerging infectious diseases and chemical threat agents. The two subsections of the LRN, the LRN-B (Biological) and the LRN-C (Chemical), are national security assets, incorporating standardized methods and equipment for rapid detection and secure reporting.

Sentinel labs in New Hampshire (hospital labs & the veterinary diagnostic) serve as our frontline receivers. Their role is to rule-out or refer suspected biological threat agents to New Hampshire Public Health Laboratories (NH PHL) which is the only LRN reference lab in the state. The role of a reference lab is to perform confirmatory testing. If further testing such as definitive characterization is needed, NH PHL would refer testing to the national labs such as the CDC.

Your sentinel laboratories are vital partners. They are trained to rule-out biological agents or refer testing to NH PHL. NH PHL conducts communication drills with NH sentinel labs periodically through the Health Alert Network (HAN) and contact information is updated as roles change. It is important for you to include your hospital labs and NH PHL in any exercises or drills involving a chemical or biological scenario. In this way, gaps can be identified, and processes improved. Communication is vital.

LRN-C labs play both jurisdictional roles, and a role for surge capacity for a large-scale event or national chemical emergency. At the local jurisdictional level, the LRN-C laboratory can bring on testing methods for chemical hazards that are of a concern locally, but not on the national high-priority threat lists. The LRN-C laboratory can also act as the pass-through liaison to connect collected clinical specimens to a certified laboratory that can perform the testing, if that particular test isn't available here. At the national level, the LRN-C has validated, CLIA-approved tests ready to perform analysis for chemical warfare agents, volatile organic compounds, toxic metals, and a variety of other chemicals and toxins for surge capacity or local events. During large-scale events, state LRN-C labs assist CDC in testing samples for chemical exposures as well as serve as front line communication among the CDC and local health officials, hospitals, and the poison control centers. LRN-C labs can also provide support to local laboratories with clinical sample packaging and shipping.

LRN-B



LRN-C



## Granite State Health Care Coalition 2020 Coalition Surge Test (CST)

The Granite State Health Care Coalition will be conducting the annual Coalition Surge Test (CST)\* on March 19, 2020 (*back-up date March 24, 2020*) in Concord, NH. The CST is a discussion-based tabletop exercise with functional elements intended to evaluate the simulated evacuation, patient placement, and transport of 20% (512 beds) of the state's acute care beds.

This year, the CST will focus on bringing partners from hospitals, long-term care facilities, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and the State of New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS) Emergency Services Unit (ESU) together with a focused approach to match evacuating patients with appropriate placements and transportation resources. ***There will be no actual movement of patients/residents.***

Hospitals and/or long-term care facilities will participate as either evacuating or receiving facilities. Liaisons from the hospitals and long-term care facilities present will coordinate efforts with their facility's command centers (which will activate at their given facilities upon notification from the Liaison Officer).

If your inpatient facility is interested in participating, please look for an invitation to register for the 2020 Coalition Surge Test in the coming weeks. Facilities that express interest in playing an evacuating facility will also be invited to attend the Pre-Exercise Seminar on March 5<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions please contact GSHCC Exercise and Training Officer, Chelsea St. George at [cstgeorge@healthynh.org](mailto:cstgeorge@healthynh.org).

*\*Community Health Institute / JSI has been contracted by the Foundation for Healthy Communities to assist in conducting the 2020 Coalition Surge Test.*

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

We are actively seeking new members from state and local public and private organizations across the continuum of care. To become a member or to learn more about GSHCC, contact [\*\*\*Shaylin Deignan\*\*\*](#) or reach out by phone at (603) 415-4263.

*The Granite State Health Care Coalition is an initiative of the Foundation for Healthy Communities, a non-profit organization that engages in innovative partnerships to improve health and health care in New Hampshire by addressing quality of care, access to care and community prevention.*

