

medical
reserve
corps



UPPER MERRIMACK VALLEY MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

WWW.UMVMRC.ORG

STRONGER EVERY YEAR!
JULY 2024

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR STAFF

Just when we think MRCs are at the top of their game, terrific opportunities arrive and the successes that result are head-spinning! (As this newsletter goes to press, we're also celebrating the Boston Celtics for winning a record 18th NBA championship! Coincidence?) This year's note from our National Program Director applauds our unit's many accomplishments throughout FY2024. Our state and regional liaisons offer reasons to celebrate MRCs across New England – on top of our own unit's receipt of three national accolades. Several articles tout the benefits of building on our strengths, reminding us that 'everyday preparedness' still counts.

There were also four blockbuster developments: 1) The national program held its first conference specific to MRCs in 12 years from May 22 to 24. Unit leaders were invited for the first time to bring a volunteer from their units. 2) The first MRC training center of its kind opened on May 17 in nearby Rhode Island. 3) Four members of our unit were invited to participate in an exciting weekend-long disaster simulation in a nearby forest. 4) Eleven UMV MRC members registered to support an innovative dementia-friendly program at the largest hospital complex in our region. Clearly, we're on a roll!

Being naturally collaborative, we're also eager to support the 30th anniversary of the nation's only public health museum in Tewksbury on Sept. 28. Meanwhile, kindly save the dates for the region's first round of flu clinics, festivals, and other coming events – as well as AHA classes. The icing on the cake: this year's Training Day is on Oct. 5! Registration opens about four weeks before each event, starting with CPR on Aug. 5.

We thank every one of you for ensuring that our unit becomes stronger every year! It's because of your talent, compassion, and dedication that we continue to exceed expectations. Your efforts matter, and we appreciate YOU!

Warmest regards,

Rae Dick, CP-FS – Director *Nancy Burns, EMT* – Coordinator

THE MISSION OF THE UMV MRC

The mission of the Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps is to recruit, train, and deploy members for disaster preparedness in three areas:

- Public health emergencies
- Mass casualty events
- Community service activities

CONTACT INFORMATION

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www.umvmrc.org

MA MRC Web Site:

www.mamedicalreservecorps.org

National MRC Web Site:

<https://aspr.hhs.gov/mrc>

Communities Served: Billerica,

Chelmsford, Dracut, Lowell, Tewksbury,

Tyngsboro, and Westford (host agency).



*Our Member Appreciation
Dinner during National
Preparedness Month
celebrated the unit's
20th anniversary!*

NOTE FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE



Dear Upper Merrimack Valley MRC Volunteers,

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with immense gratitude for your unwavering dedication and tireless efforts in serving our communities. The contributions of the UMV MRC volunteers, who collectively donated 1527 hours of service, have resulted in an economic value of nearly \$60,000 to the communities across your region. Your impact has been significant and far reaching.

To mention some of the activities that you have engaged in over the last year, the UMV MRC has supported:

- **Veterans' monthly breakfasts**, by providing hypertension screenings and answering health-related questions. Your ongoing commitment ensures that our veterans receive essential health monitoring and support.
- **Presentations to seniors** about the importance of preparedness, which have left a lasting impression. The engaging discussions on 72-hour kits, emergency registries, and collaborations with municipal services have equipped many seniors with the knowledge to stay safe and prepared.
- The successful introduction of the **Psychological First Aid** course to your unit – with oversight from one of its original developers – which highlights your dedication to mental health preparedness. This course has strengthened your community's ability to respond to the emotional impact of emergencies effectively.
- The **Love All Serve All (LASA)** clinics, where your medical expertise is on full display. By providing vital screenings and linking underserved individuals to essential resources, you made a profound difference. Your swift intervention in identifying a critically high cholesterol level in one visitor exemplifies the life-saving impact of your work.
- More than 70 volunteers supported **12 flu clinics**, resulting in the inoculation of at least 1,600 residents. Your efforts were instrumental in protecting our community's health during flu season.
- The UMV MRC's participation in six **festivals and health fairs** in September alone – honoring National Preparedness Month – connected thousands of attendees with public health outreach, hypertension screenings, and family fitness initiatives. Your presence at these events has significantly raised awareness about health and wellness.
- Collaboration with the national MRC program's media staff to **publish four articles** in The Nursing Beat online newsletter, reaching over 24,000 readers. Your insightful contributions on topics such as fire prevention, household preparedness, and disaster preparedness for nurses and dementia patients have been invaluable in raising public awareness.

Each of these accomplishments is a testament to your hard work, passion, and dedication. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to the Upper Merrimack Valley MRC and the communities you serve.

Together, we are building a safer, healthier future.

With heartfelt gratitude,
Dustun Ashton
Dustun Ashton
MRC Program Director

SAVE THE DATE: UMV MRC TRAINING DAY!

Saturday, October 5, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Middlesex Community College
Bedford, MA Campus

This is our unit's signature event!
Pre-registration is strongly advised.

Please sign up when you receive the email
with registration instructions.



STATEWIDE MRC UPDATES



OFFICE OF
PREPAREDNESS
AND EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

Recent Activities – The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management (MDPH OPEM) received a federal grant through the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) in June 2023 to support the MRC program statewide. Of several projects included in the grant application, the Statewide Volunteer Training Day (June 1st) and a statewide training assessment have been two major focuses for the department this spring.

Training Day – This event allowed MRC leaders and volunteers to come together to:

1. Identify best practices and strategies for responding to emergencies and disasters as a volunteer.
2. Understand the potential impacts of emergencies on public health and healthcare systems.
3. Develop essential competencies that will enhance the ability to serve the community effectively.

We were excited to host Amy Herman as our keynote speaker! Her session, “The Art of Perception: See What Matters,” used works of art as tools to enhance volunteers’ assessment, communication, and critical response skills. In addition to the plenary, sessions highlighted practical tools such as “An Introduction to Psychological First Aid” and the “ShowMe App” (a versatile communication tool available to facilitate clearer interaction during emergencies). Presentations on cultivating soft skills included “Bias and Society.” That pivotal session explored the psychological phenomena of implicit and explicit bias, and the impact of bias on our decision making and behavior. Attendees from across the state gave the day high marks, as they thanked us for equipping them with valuable information, relevant tools, and useful content to better respond to a public health emergency. We were pleased to see the strong showing by a dozen members from the UVM MRC alone!

Training Assessment – MDPH OPEM is also completing a project to build MRC capacity across local units through training and development. The focus includes the identification and standardization of necessary training, along with a compilation of unit resources such as a training schedule. We hope that this work will result in a clearly defined curriculum and a set of shared resources that will offer a consistent approach, when utilizing MRC volunteers during an emergency or public health event.

A short survey has been disseminated to MRC leaders and partners to collect applicable information. In addition to the feedback received, we will be looking at training resources from our federal partners. We’ll also conduct roundtable discussions with several MRC leaders, as well as with a diverse group of MRC volunteers from across the state. After the information and analysis phase is completed, we will be developing materials this summer to support MRC units with improved training content and resources. Be on the lookout for more information by this fall!

New Grant Year – With the warm weather comes a new grant year! MDPH OPEM has asked the 34 federally recognized MRC units to discuss both individual and regional priorities for the upcoming year. This year MRC units were able to choose from a list of pre-populated priority areas. Many units will focus their planning and response efforts on one or more of these priorities:

- Supporting activities in underserved areas or populations
- Incorporating health equity practices to enhance preparedness and response support
- Developing and refining unit-specific plans and procedures
- Focusing on training, volunteer engagement, and building partnerships with community organizations, local public health departments and other healthcare partners.

We look forward to reading more about the great work MRCs and their volunteers are involved with over the upcoming year!

REGIONAL ROUND-UP



Greetings to all of the wonderful members of the UMV MRC!!! The Office of the Medical Reserve Corps (OMRC) has had a productive 21st year moving into a brand-new division of the US Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS), the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR), with our program finding its home in the newly created Center for Preparedness.

New England stands at 87 MRC units: ME-3, VT-8, NH-13, MA-35, CT-24, and RI-4. All of these units have been carrying out a wide a range of activities that address their community's identified needs.

Over the last year, New England MRC volunteers have contributed over 64,000 hours of their time with an economic value of \$2.5M. Their activities include unit administration, training and exercises, public health outreach, and true response activations. Unit leaders continue to be creative in their responses to community needs including:

- Vermont's free dental care for rural children and foot care clinics
- Rhode Island's new state-of-the-art training institute
- Massachusetts' care for immigrants
- Maine's assistance with hospital staffing after the horrific Lewiston mass shooting
- New Hampshire's statewide eclipse response
- Connecticut's unified training plan development for all MRC unit volunteers

January 2024 marked my 19th year as a regional representative to the National Program Office. It is thrilling to see the new members of the staff embrace the essence of this unique and genuine program. This perspective allows me to see the potential for continued growth and hope for the future of the program. We continue to adapt and respond to all that we are faced with every day – and high-level government leaders are taking notice! MRCs are not only becoming more and more visible every day, they are also becoming a stronger institution. I couldn't be prouder of your successes!

Thank you for all you do, every day!

Jennifer Frenette, Region I (New England) MRC Liaison

NATIONAL RECOGNITION!

Our unit received three national acknowledgements in FY2024.

1. YOUTH MEMBERS – Ranjana and Navin Ramesh were profiled here:
<https://aspr.hhs.gov/MRC/Meet/Pages/MRC-Network-Ranjana-and-Navin-Ramesh.aspx>

2. PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL – Your coordinator collaborated with colleagues from across the MRC network to publish the only article about volunteers in the September 2023 Health Security Supplement. “Recognizing the Impact of Medical Reserve Corps Volunteers on the COVID-19 Pandemic Response” is posted here:
<https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/pdf/10.1089/hs.2023.0010>

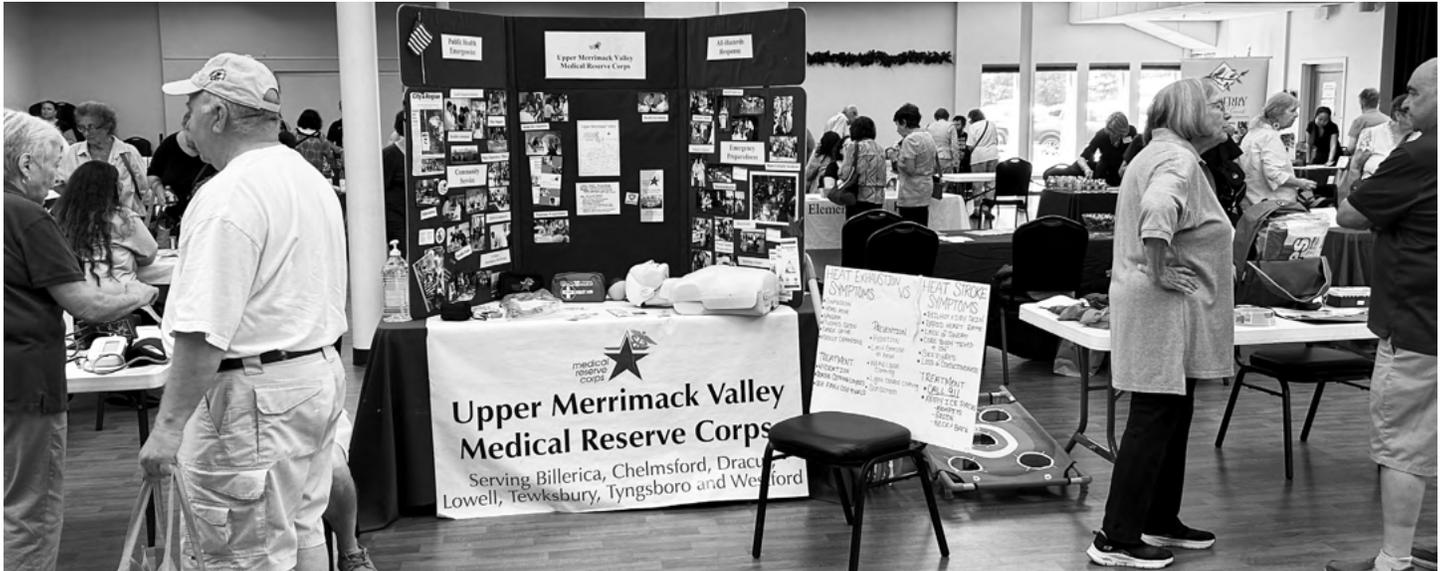
The supplement was also announced in the opening day plenary at the Preparedness Summit in Cleveland (March) and the MRC Summit in Chicago (May).

3. NURSE'S WEEK – UMV MRC member Lori Evans, RN was spotlighted in ASPR social media posts:
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=863204185836674&set=a.239372808219818>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/C6rF51SRfiU/>
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7193639437388369921>
Twitter/X: <https://x.com/ASPRgov/status/1787872843750883329>



HEALTH AND WELLNESS EVENTS

One of the best ways to provide community outreach while activating members of all levels and backgrounds is by supporting the many health fairs in which we participate throughout the year. Our members staffed numerous health and volunteer fairs, bike rodeos, and related events throughout the fiscal year.



At our last health fair of FY2024 in Tewksbury, we ‘pulled out all the stops’ to ensure that our exhibit would offer something interesting for each visitor. Thanks to our six volunteers across two shifts, activities included BP screenings; an invitation for visitors to practice with epi pens, CAT tourniquets, and hands-only CPR; comparisons of 72-hour kits for seniors and their pets; examples of first aid kits; information about heat-related emergencies for the summer months; hula hoops and bag-toss games to encourage family fitness; and general awareness and recruitment for the MRC. We also distributed our brand-new UMV MRC bookmarks with our contact information.



One of our long-term volunteers listened carefully to visitors and answered their questions about 72-hour kits and preparedness.



Our UMV MRC Director joined the police and the community wellness coordinator in supporting a bike rodeo in Westford on June 5.

KUDOS FROM LASA

We are always honored to provide care for the medically underserved via LASA (Love All, Serve All), and were humbled by these words of appreciation from the organizers.

Please accept this note of gratitude to you and your team for your assistance with the LASA Free Health Clinic on Saturday, April 27. Medical volunteers from the UMV MRC played a critical role as always for this event. They triaged and selflessly served at least 216 visitors, contributing their valuable time on a weekend.

On behalf of the LASA foundation, I sincerely thank you and your team for providing your services for this vital cause. We look forward to seeing your team again at the next clinic on October 26. Thank you and have a great day!

Sandeep Menon MD, PhD, MS, MPH
– President, LASA Foundation Inc.

Another Year of Exceeding Expectations!

We promoted resilience at wellness events.



Members represented the unit at two Summits and learned from experts at the MA Volunteer Training Day.



Volunteers continued to provide free BP screenings for the region's veterans at monthly breakfasts.

Four members joined a comprehensive disaster medical simulation under austere conditions.



Ten medical members supported our fourth LASA clinic.



Flu clinics have become staple of our activities!

Volunteers learned about patient movement and caregiver safety issues to provide dementia-friendly support at LGH.



Our unit collaborated with the host agent's Council on Aging and Fire Department on safety initiatives – including distribution of 100 free 'Safe Footing Kits' for winter.

We celebrated the inauguration of TILI!



VOLUNTEER VIEWS FROM THE SUMMIT

The Medical Reserve Corps Summit, held in Chicago from May 22 to 24, was funded by federal grants to focus specifically on MRCs. This was the first time in 12 years that MRC unit leaders could assemble for training and networking at their own event, not as part of a larger conference. This was also the first summit when leaders were invited to bring a ‘plus-one’ volunteer from their units! We were delighted that Lori Evans, RN was able to participate from the UMV MRC. Here’s what Lori had to say about the experience.

I was honored by the invitation to represent UMV MRC volunteers at the 2024 MRC National Summit held in Chicago this spring. NACCHO (the National Association of County and City Health Officials) welcomed over 640 hard-working and compassionate individuals from across the country, who have dedicated their lives to provide emergency and non-emergency services to their local communities. I was in awe with the scope and depth of this conference. It was also gratifying to see the leaders receive support and gratitude for all their hard work. Of the many sessions I attended, the most impactful were the following:

Disaster Gap: Steps for creating a team to address mental health needs after a critical incident. *This session was hosted by two very dynamic women who had been part of the Boston Marathon bombing and the Highland Park, Illinois parade shooting. The term I took away was that the bystanders that jumped in to help did not merely “stand by.” Rather, they were “Spontaneous Responders.”*



Building Transformational Collaboration Between the American Red Cross and MRC. *It was encouraging to hear the dialogue led by high-level leaders from both organizations.*

Beyond Crisis Response: A New Era of Mental Health Resilience and Preparedness for the Workforce and Community. *This session spoke to the importance of giving people the tools to create a “Flourishing” mindset in times of stress and anxiety.*

I met a lot of incredible people, learned plenty of acronyms, enjoyed the beautiful city of Chicago, and spent some wonderful time with Nancy and her colleagues, who were truly in their element! I also have a deeper appreciation for all the hard work our MRC does with its dedicated volunteers under seasoned leadership. Thank you for this opportunity!

WELCOME TO TILI!

May 17 was a red-letter day for the MRC program with the launch of a spectacular new education facility. Dignitaries came from as far away as Washington, DC to West Warwick, RI for the inaugural celebration of TILI: the Training, Innovation, and Leadership Institute.



Some of the many training features include animatronic manikins that watch responders and describe their symptoms; a dynamic touch-screen to select 3D rotational views of each system of the human body for focused learning, a high-tech communications center, and care of injured animals and promotion of therapy dogs.

Brooke Lawrence, TILI co-founder and Executive Director of the Rhode Island MRC, cited the event as the culmination of more than a year of hard work to bring this trail-blazing center to life. “TILI is a pioneer in the advancement of simulation education,” said Lawrence. “The facility offers transformative experiences in professional development and crisis response. The state-of-the-art environments that TILI provides are meticulously crafted to offer immersive opportunities that foster critical thinking, proficient problem-solving, and dynamic leadership.” See <https://youtube.com/watch?v=HBQ16cRyBqo&feature=shared>

DISASTER MEDICAL TEAMS FIELD SIMULATION

Four UMV MRC members participated in a large-scale exercise at a forest in Andover from April 26 to 28, in an exercise co-sponsored by the Center for Disaster Medicine at MGH (Massachusetts General Hospital) and the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative. This joint training included multiple organizations and was held in collaboration with the RI Regional Disaster Health Response System (RDHRS). The simulation included a capstone project for graduate students studying interdisciplinary response. The various modules enacted throughout the forest reflected the complex nature of real international crisis zones.

As shown in the photos below – courtesy of Kate Flock / MGH Photography – our station represented the field hospital. Our group practiced responder skills for austere environments: using a compass, wound care, patient movement, Incident Command, packing wisely, and camping for deployments.



EVERYDAY PREPAREDNESS

Imagine you're coming home from work at the end of a lovely day, and discover that there's no power on your street. When a large tree collapsed without warning across nearby power lines on June 5, households in a small Westford neighborhood had varying reactions. A family with hungry children picked up fast food for dinner. A couple with chronic health issues had long ago set up a generator to start automatically in a power failure. Kindly neighbors checked in on each other. Those who'd lived in places where the loss of electricity is routine ensured that they would have easy access to flashlights, camp lanterns, and fresh batteries. (Although candles and matches can help, the fire hazard they present makes this option more of a stopgap than a solution.) Others who should know better – *ahem!* – were caught off guard. Fortunately, the situation was resolved overnight. How well prepared would *you* be in a sudden power outage or other setback?



Same intersection at 7PM
Weds. and 7AM Thurs.



Here are three tips on how to manage such scenarios.

1. **ASSESS THE SITUATION.** What's going on? Is everyone safe? How long might this challenge continue? A walk down the street revealed that wires were down, police had set up cones to mark off the hazard, and a utility truck was on scene. Websites accessible by cell phone predicted when power would be restored. Situational awareness helps you to set basic parameters on the severity of the emergency and how to deal with it.
2. **HAVE A PLAN.** Your strategy may be affected by whether there's still plenty of daylight, stores are open and you have transportation, your communications are intact, and whether you can overcome power limitations by setting out – or purchasing – supplemental lighting. Solar powered chargers could keep cell phones and other devices operable. If the power failure is isolated, there may be a facility nearby for powering up electronic devices. A focus on carrying out logical steps can help those affected remain calm and have a sense of control over the situation.
3. **LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE!** As Winston Churchill was working to form the United Nations after WWII, he famously said, "**Never let a good crisis go to waste.**" How can you be better prepared in case such an incident happens again? Do you know where your flashlights are? Have you backed up the files on your PC? Avoided opening the refrigerator to keep items cool? Be sure to note and apply any lessons learned.

NOAA (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) predicts an above-normal 2024 Atlantic hurricane season from June 1 through November 30. Their advisories for hurricane preparedness apply to most major weather hazards over the coming months. See their website for details: <https://www.noaa.gov/hurricane-prep>



ANNIVERSARY SUPPORT

The Public Health Museum in Tewksbury is reaching a big milestone. The museum will be 30 years old on Saturday, Sept. 28. This is the only public health museum in the nation! The Museum's leadership has engaged our UMV MRC in presenting at their "Outbreak!" summer program for youth, and has otherwise partnered with our unit and its affiliates over many years.



In honor of the Museum's 30th Anniversary, the organizers are hosting a special open house that day. Several local organizations will be gathering to celebrate with the local community. Our unit is invited to help with wellness activities that could include BP, glucose, and cholesterol screening, provide flu shots, and answer medication questions. Please "Save the Date" on your calendars. Stop by to offer congratulations, and help to provide services if you're available. Send email to nburns@westfordma.gov if you'd like to participate.

FLU CLINICS

One of our unit's many strengths is the support of **vaccination clinics** across the region – especially for seasonal influenza and other conditions (including pneumonia and COVID-19). These scheduled events help members get to know our community and each other, while practicing essential skills in an easygoing environment. **Volunteers of all backgrounds** can participate. "Inoculators" are typically nurses who fill syringes and vaccinate. "Admins" can be anyone willing to provide non-medical support – such as registration, clinic flow, and the use of COLOR software to log clinic data. Members typically arrive up to an hour before each clinic for set-up and Just-In-Time Training. Please email nburns@westfordma.gov anytime to let us know if you're available for specific dates. Watch your email and our web site (www.UMVMRC.org) for updates!

Billerica:

Weds. Oct. 16 – Seeking 6 inoculators and 5 admins at 8:30 for clinic from 9 to 11:30 a.m. at the Senior Center, for residents 55+ and those with chronic conditions.

Mon. Oct. 21 – Seeking 4 inoculators and 4 admins from 3 to 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

Chelmsford:

Weds. Sept. 18 – Seeking 5 inoculators and 4 admins, traveling across all 5 Senior Housing facilities for clinics between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Option for volunteers to choose a 3-hour shift.

Thurs. Oct. 10 – Seeking 8 inoculators and 13 admins at the Senior Center; report by 2 for clinic that runs from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. First town-wide influenza clinic of the year.

Tues. Oct. 15 – Seeking 4 inoculators and 6 admins for employee clinic at Town Hall. Shifts from 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., and from 3 to 6 p.m.

Lowell:

Fri. Oct. 11 – Seeking 5 inoculators and 2 admins at 8:15 for clinic from 9 a.m. to noon. (Location: either City Hall or Health Dept.)

Tues. Oct. 15 – Seeking 5 inoculators and 2 admins at 1:15 for clinic from 2 to 6 p.m. at Lowell Health Dept.

Westford:

Weds. Oct. 9 – Seeking 10 inoculators and 10 admins from noon to 4 p.m. at Millennium for residents 65+. Three volunteers for set-up from 9 to 11 would also be appreciated.

Thurs. Oct. 17 – Seeking 10 inoculators and 15 admins from 4 to 8 p.m. at W.A; set-up at 2:15 p.m.

Tues. Oct. 22 – Seeking 5 inoculators and 5 admins from 2 to 5 p.m. at Millennium, for municipal and public school employees. Staff set-up at 12:30 may also need volunteers.

Thurs. Oct. 24 – Seeking 10 inoculators and 15 admins from 4 to 8 p.m. at W.A; set-up at 2:15 p.m.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please contact the Coordinator at 978-399-2549 or NBurns@WestfordMA.gov to sign up for activities of interest. Also check email notices and the web site, www.UMVMRC.org, for updates.

I. Festivals and Service Opportunities – Volunteers at all levels are needed to cover shifts at these events. *Medical members*: especially for hypertension screening and first aid. *Non-medical members*: for preparedness and health initiatives. *All*: raise awareness of the MRC and offer community outreach.

Sun. Aug. 18: *Tour de Cure* cycling event for American Diabetes Assn. Seeking 2 medical volunteers per shift to provide triage and first aid in rest stops at Chelmsford and other locations from 8-11 a.m. and 11-2 p.m.

Sat. Sept. 7: *Dracut Old Home Day*. Three shifts: 8 to 9 a.m. for set-up; 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1 to 5 p.m. for staffing. High School Complex, 1580 Lakeview Ave, Dracut.

Sun. Sept. 15: *Live for Liv*. 8 to 11 a.m. and 11 to 2 p.m. at 4H Fairgrounds in Westford: first aid and general event support.

Sat. Sept. 21:

- ***Tyngsboro Health and Safety Fair***. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the elementary school, 205 Westford Road. Seeking 3 medical and 3 administrative volunteers to promote the MRC and public health initiatives.
- ***Yankee Doodle Homecoming***. Three shifts: 7 to 8 a.m. set-up, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 2 to 5 p.m. High School fields in Billerica Center. Festival usually opens right after the parade ends (approx. 10:45).

Sat. Sept. 28: *Chelmsford Fall Festival*. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Town Common; 3-hour shifts available. Seeking 10 volunteers to support the Health Dept. exhibit and family activities (petting zoo, bouncy house, pumpkin table, other).

Sun. Oct. 20: *Bay State Marathon*. 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Medical volunteers are asked to staff the triage tents at key locations in Lowell.

Sat. Oct. 26: *LASA Health Clinic*. 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Medical volunteers are needed for intake and basic services, for area residents who have inadequate access to health care.

Thursdays Through 2024: *Veteran's BP Screening*. Chelmsford Senior Center, 75 Groton Road (Rt. 40), 8 to 10 a.m. last Thursday of the month at Veteran's breakfasts. Need two medical volunteers on each date; can sign up for one or several: July 25, August 29, Sept. 26, Oct. 31, Nov. 21, Dec. 19.

II. AHA Courses – These classes can accept up to 15 students (plus a wait-list) and are valid for two years of American Heart Association certification. Attendees must register in advance and pay up to \$28 the night of class to cover the cost of materials. Classes themselves are free. Location is Millennium School, 23 Depot Street, Westford.

Heartsaver CPR – Layperson training. Mon. Aug. 5, 6 to 9:30 p.m. Learn CPR, AED, and choking relief.

Heartsaver First Aid – For all backgrounds. Thurs. Sept. 5. Learn how to provide basic medical care in emergencies.

BLS – CPR/AED Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers. Thurs. Sept. 19, 6 to 10 p.m. For medical members only.



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UMV MRC
55 Main Street
Westford, MA 01886

Civilian Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities

DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COLLABORATION WITH LGH!

The UMV MRC is proud to support a brand-new initiative with Tufts Medicine / LGH (Lowell General Hospital). Because their busy 'med-surge' unit (MS2) regularly includes patients who also have dementia, LGH reached out to ask if our volunteers could provide extra attention to this population in the hospital setting. Eleven of our members signed up, nine of whom were able to attend the kick-off orientation with additional LGH volunteers on June 13. (See photo below.) The first assignments were made the following week.



Participants completed a rigorous onboarding process before their acceptance into the new program. Many of the participants were especially motivated to help because they had family members with Alzheimer's.

According to Myra Dionido-Magat, BSN, RN, MS2 Clinical Manager and spearhead of the program, "Caring for patients with dementia on a medical inpatient unit requires a specialized approach with collaboration of interdisciplinary departments, as well as the involvement of volunteer support. This has to be a team approach for the program to be successful. The MS2 Team is incredibly grateful for the support of the amazing volunteers."

Volunteers learned from experts about dementia, safety issues, patient care protocols, positive communications, and their roles in befriending these patients. Tyler Michaud, Workplace Violence Prevention Program Manager, emphasized to the group, "You're stepping into something really monumental, and we're all truly excited about it."