

IMERT Develops Deployment Training Course for Members to Prepare, Practice

The Illinois Medical Emergency Response Team (IMERT) and INVENT, the Illinois Nurse Team, introduced a new training course for its members in May. The Deployment Development Training program provided two days of skills demonstration and practice exercises in a simulated deployment environment.

The debut Deployment Development was held May 2-3, 2009, at the ILEAS Training Center in Urbana and attracted about 80 team members.

The program was developed to teach the confidence and practical skills necessary to be a better disaster responder, focusing on communication and collaboration as the keys to success for a more effective team.

Participants were required to report to the seminar as they would for a real-world deployment, in uniform with their personal gear cache packed and ready for use.

The first day of the seminar combined presentations and hands-on skills stations to demonstrate the IMERT equipment package and its utilization in an alternate-case site setting. All of the elements critical to establishing a successful deployment environment were included.

Participants determined better ways to pack their personal gear caches; reviewed the supplies that comprise the medical package; set up and organized supplies and equipment as it would be in a real deployment; utilized the radios and patient scanners, learned about specialized equipment including the GenSat trailer and disaster tent;

practiced patient conveyance procedures with stretchers, backboards, and 4-wheel utility vehicles; and reviewed JumpSTART triage protocols.

On the second day, participants put their skills to the test in a day-long real-time exercise that simulated a deployment exactly as IMERT-INVENT members will experience it in real-world action. As the seminar was held right as the swine flu outbreak was building, the scenario simulated a pandemic.

The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive, both from team members who have participated in previous deployments and those for whom this was the first "field" experience with the IMERT-INVENT team.

Participants called the new program "the best IMERT training [they'd] ever been to" and "the ultimate see-it, hear-it, do-it weekend."

As the course was so well-received, IMERT-INVENT plans to offer Deployment Development Training seminars on a more frequent basis. The seminar is open to all IMERT-INVENT team members looking for additional training experience and continuing education credit.

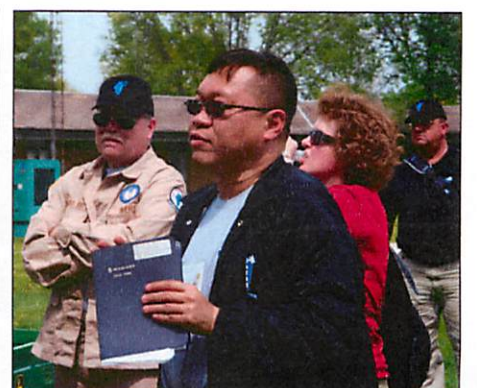
For more information on how to become involved with IMERT-INVENT, visit www.imert.org.



Team members practice packaging a patient on a backboard and transferring the packaged patient onto a 4-wheel utility vehicle for transport.



Sam Mullin, EMT-B, reviews the principles of patient scanning technology during a deployment.



LEFT: Team members review the IMERT equipment and supplies. CENTER: Participants don protective equipment and work together to prepare the deployment environment. RIGHT: Moses Lee, MD, FACEP, Team Commander and Medical Director, looks on as members organize and set up supplies during the simulated pandemic scenario.