

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Mateo County Health System

Health System to Test Partnership with Local Emergency Response Teams

Health Officials to Hand Out Emergency Preparedness Brochures, Simulate Medicine Distribution

SAN MATEO, Calif. — As part of the San Mateo County Health System’s “Silver Dragon IV” emergency drill, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) and the San Mateo Coastside Medical Reserve Corps (SMC MRC) will go door-to-door delivering earthquake preparedness information on March 11, 2010, from 9 a.m. until noon. The exercise will test the Health System’s ability to partner with local cities, law enforcement, fire departments, MRC, and CERT teams, to distribute large quantities of medicine and medical supplies from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Strategic National Stockpile (SNS).

CERT and SMC MRC volunteers throughout the County will practice their readiness to provide emergency assistance, specifically in the event of a major health emergency such as Pandemic Influenza, a food or water-borne illness, or an intentional release of a bioagent. In order to test door-to-door distribution as realistically as possible, CERT and MRC teams will distribute earthquake preparedness brochures to simulate the medicine that could be delivered following a health-related emergency involving large segments of the population.

This is the fourth year San Mateo County Health System has organized this exercise. For Silver Dragon I, the team delivered brochures to 1,300 households to gauge how long it would take to deliver medicine to a population of that size. For Silver Dragon II and III, the time was fixed at three hours, and teams were tasked with tracking the number of households reached in that time frame. This year, the team will test how long it takes to visit 10,000 homes countywide.

In addition to testing the Health System’s ability to distribute medications, this exercise will test San Mateo County’s existing plans to receive SNS medicine and medical supplies as quickly as possible. The SNS will be deployed in the event of a public health emergency severe enough to cause local supplies to run out. Once Federal and local authorities agree that the SNS is needed, medicines can be delivered to any state in the U.S. within 12 hours. While waiting for the SNS shipment to arrive, San Mateo County is prepared to distribute medicine and supplies from its own pharmaceutical stockpile.

Participating Agencies:

Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department, Cal Fire, Coastside Medical Reserve Corps, Foster City Fire Department, Half Moon Bay Police Department, Menlo College, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, Millbrae Fire Department, North County Fire Authority, Pacifica Police Department, Redwood City Fire Department, San Mateo County Health System, San Mateo County Office of Emergency Services, San Mateo Fire Department, San Mateo Medical Center, South San Francisco Fire Department