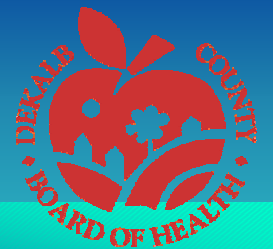


Organizational Model of the Medical Reserve Corps Program at the DeKalb County Board of Health

Vickie Elisa, BA

**Program Director, Medical
Reserve Corps**



Demographics



DeKalb County, GA represents one of the 10 counties surrounding Atlanta. A suburban community of 665,000 people, it is one of the most culturally diverse communities in the southeastern part of the United States. More than 139 languages are spoken. It is a resettlement community for thousands of refugees.

Demographics



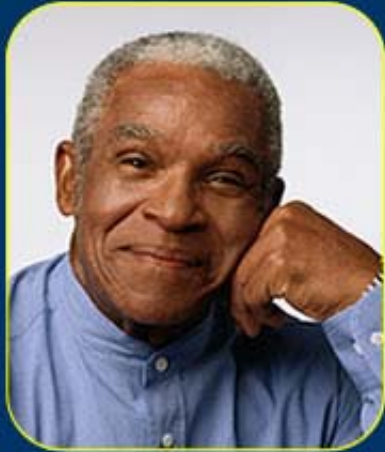
Established in 1921, the DeKalb County Board of Health serves the people who live, work and play in the community. Our mission is to promote and provide quality, preventive and primary care that reduces or eliminates disease, injury, disability and premature death. We unite with business, civic groups, faith institutions, education and citizens to accomplish our goals.

The Public Health Infrastructure

- Our annual operating budget is \$34 million
- We have a workforce of over 550 individuals
- We have six health centers located throughout DeKalb County
- We have managed care partnerships with Grady Health Systems, Children's Health Care of Atlanta and DeKalb Medical Center
- We are involved with SNS plans, all hazards plans and have a 22 year old volunteer program.



Diversity - More Than A Word



- Staff is able to interpret 22 languages; and translate into 11
- Web site: www.dekalbhealth.net averages 300,000 hits per month and 9 million since 1998
- Three cable programs Spanish, English and Vietnamese on government access television
- We produce a program called the Security Report, about local preparedness efforts.

Community Assets:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Rollins School of Public Health
- Emory University
- State Public Health Lab
- DeKalb County Office of Homeland Security
- Corporations: CNN, Coca-Cola, Delta Airlines, Home Depot and BellSouth.

More than 90 million people move through Hartsfield International Airport each year.

DeKalb County Board of Health was funded in 1999 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to develop a Center for Public Health Preparedness.



We are one of three health departments funded by the National Health Alert Network/Training Exemplar projects.

The center's role is to:

- Enhance the metro Atlanta's readiness to respond quickly to BT emergencies.**
- Establish effective communications and electronic public health surveillance.**
- Develop tabletops and training activities for health care and emergency response professionals.**



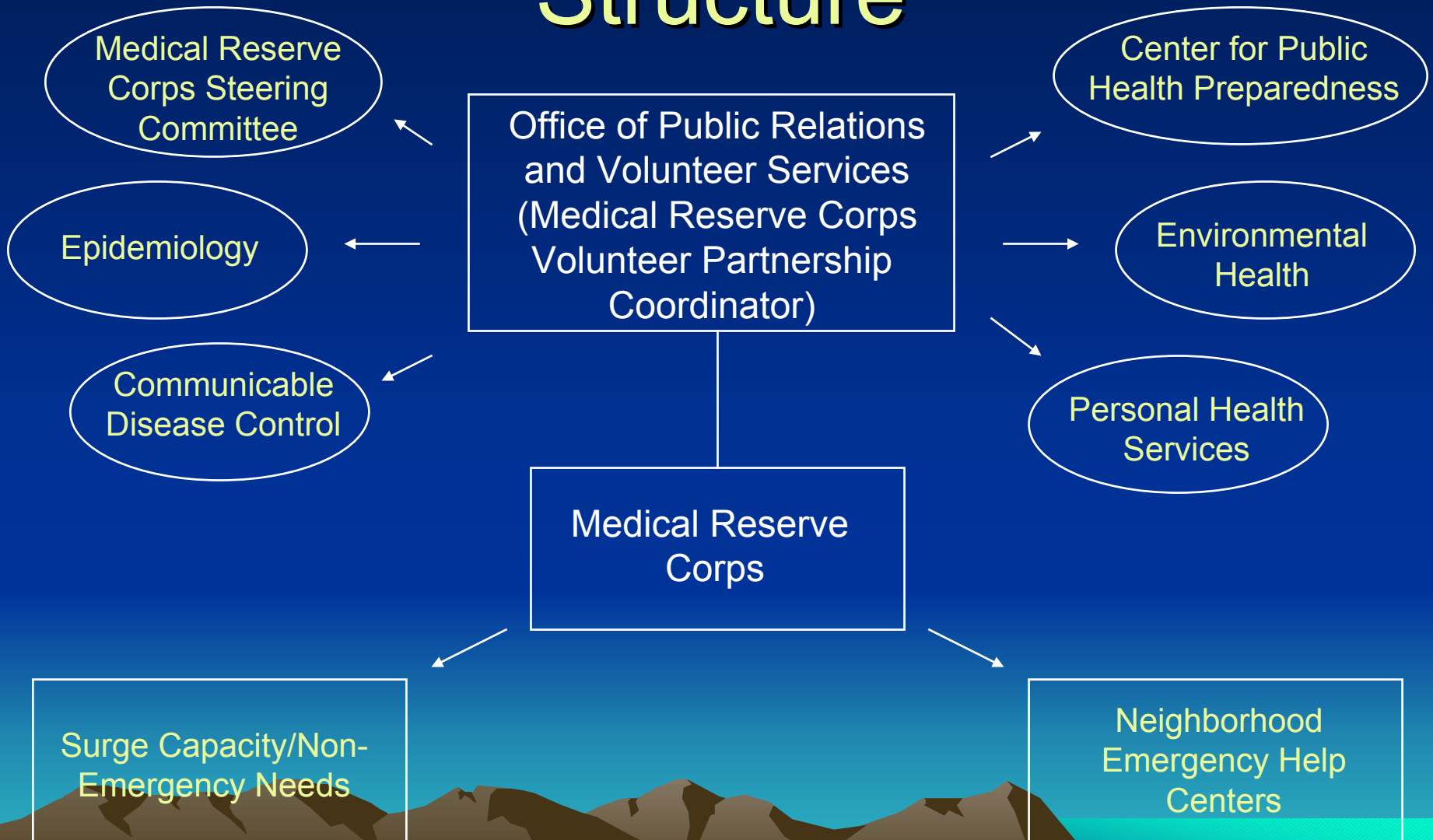
Partners include:

- American Red Cross
- GEMA
- CDC
- DeKalb Medical Center
- DHR
- Veterans Affairs
- FBI/GBI
- Fulton County Department of Health
- Georgia Poison Control Center
- Georgia Public Health Lab
- Grady Health System
- Medical Association of Georgia
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
- National Guard
- DeKalb County Homeland Security

The DeKalb County Medical Reserve Corps is designed to fit within the overall organizational structure of the DeKalb County Board of Health.



MRC Organizational Structure



A steering committee composed of internal and external members helps to manage, develop direction and overall goals of MRC. External groups include:

- National Association of Retired Federal Employees - 70 volunteers
- Community Relations Commission - 500 volunteers
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - 800 volunteers
- DeKalb County School System - 800 volunteers
- St. Luke's Presbyterian Church - 300 volunteers
- Watsonian Society/CDC - 100 volunteers
- CEO/DeKalb Medical Center - 400 volunteers
- DeKalb Medical Society - 400 medical volunteers
- Georgia Nurses Association - 300 volunteers

(continued)

- Emory University, Center for BT Preparedness - 100 volunteers
- Georgia Medical Association - 150 volunteers
- Georgia Hospital Association - 300 volunteers
- DeKalb County Board of Health - 300 volunteers
- Office of Homeland Security - 50 volunteers
- American Red Cross - 800 volunteers
- DeKalb County Police Department - 100 volunteers
- Scottdale Child Development Center - 50 members
- Grady Health System - 200 volunteers
- DeKalb County Fire/Rescue Services- 100 volunteers
- Health and Human Services, Region IV

MRC Activities:

- * Mock anthrax clinic drill conducted in October, 2003.
- * On-line application for MRC volunteers
- * Internal/external retreats conducted to better integrate MRC within existing health department's emergency planning efforts.
- * Development of a cable television program.
- * Pro bono work to develop model for liability, credentialing and background checks.
- * Multi-ethnic recruitment plans.
- * Tie-in with BOH leadership management.
- * Tie-in with three local schools of nursing.
- * E-newsletter for training opportunities.
- * Volunteer recognition ceremony – year 2.



Challenges/Barriers:

- * Internal and external turf guarding**
- * Limited resources**

Strategies

- * Internal and external marketing of MRC**
- * “Finding mutual ground”**





Ongoing training– Establishment of an ongoing training calendar that goes beyond BT preparedness but also includes leadership development skills such as public speaking, grant writing, program design, evaluation.

Partnership building is critical.

Next Steps:

- Volunteer recruitment/training for mock “anthrax” clinic.
- Lessons learned are shared
- Refinement of approach
- Evaluation of process
- Assessment of software to manage volunteer database
- Environmental scan of volunteer groups/organizations
- Community education about MRC for corporate partners, elected officials and faith base groups.
- Recognition ceremony for MRC steering committee and volunteers
- Identification of future locations to test preparedness for “dirty bombs,” chemical spill and/or influenza outbreak.



Contact

For more information contact

Vickie Elisa

Vickie_elisa@yahoo.com

(404) 294-3829

