

# North Carolina Disaster Response Network (NC DRN)

## *Disaster Mental Health Training*

# FACT SHEET

This fact sheet contains answers to the following questions:

- What is the NC DRN?
- Why should I consider taking this training?
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### **What is the NC DRN?**

The North Carolina Disaster Response Network (NC DRN) is a network of mental health professionals who are trained to respond in the event of a disaster. The DRN was created, in part, because of the growing recognition – by the public and by mental health professionals themselves – that mental health professionals can make significant contributions to the positive, psychological recovery of disaster survivors and disaster response workers. We began our disaster mental health response work in 1995 through an agreement with the American Red Cross; however, we have expanded to respond to other disaster-related events as we have grown, learned and become more established in North Carolina. We have worked with various other groups which have requested assistance in the wake of disasters – large or small, near or far. Aside from responding to disaster events, the DRN remains actively involved in maintaining an organized way to recruit, train, liaison, and support mental health professionals interested in the field of disaster mental health.

### **Why should I consider taking this training?**

Disaster mental health response work is very different than the type of work that most mental health professionals are used to engaging in on a regular basis. It is considered essential to have specialized disaster mental health training prior to volunteering in the aftermath of a disaster, and the NC DRN training is a baseline level of training which serves as a prerequisite for involvement with the NC DRN. The goal of the NC DRN training program is to increase the number of trained mental health professionals who are able to volunteer to respond effectively and ethically to disasters. This training is ideal for the new volunteer who needs an orientation to disaster mental health responding, but volunteers who already have the training can also benefit from using the training as a re-fresher for

disaster mental health responding. Even mental health volunteers with extensive experience find periodic review and updating of their knowledge base and skills to be invaluable.

## Which mental health professionals are eligible to take the NC DRN Training and join the NC DRN?

This training is designed for those who want to join the NC DRN as well as those who are already NC DRN members. The mental health professionals eligible to be included within the NC DRN are: Licensed Psychologists, Licensed Psychological Associates, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Psychiatrists, Licensed Professional Counselors, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Psychiatric Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, and Licensed Clinical Addictions Specialists.

## What if I'm not a mental health professional or not licensed in NC?

While this training was developed for licensed mental health professionals in North Carolina, everyone is welcome to take this training to learn about disaster mental health. Follow the instructions for Part I below and note that only generic continuing education units are available for those who are not licensed mental health professionals in North Carolina.

## What topics are covered in the online training?

The eight 30-minute web-based modules in this training program cover basic disaster mental health concepts, including:

- 1 – Introduction to the NC DRN and the Training
- 2 – Types and Phases of Disasters
- 3 – Bio-Psycho-Social Responses to Disasters
- 4 – Mental Health Interventions in Disasters
- 5 – Resiliency in Disasters
- 6 – Self-Care for Disaster Responders
- 7 – Ethical Issues in Disaster Response
- 8 – Activation for Disasters

We recommend completing each module in the order presented above.

## How do I start my participation in this training?

The NC Disaster Response Network training program is a way for licensed mental health professionals to receive training in preparation for disaster mental health volunteer responding. **Part I** of the course is online and is comprised of eight 30-minute modules covering a variety of disaster mental health topics. After completing the online portion of the training, participants can to attend **Part II**, a 2 hour in-person simulation workshop featuring disaster simulations and hands-on activities. Completion of Parts I & II (online modules & live workshop) takes approximately 6 hours. (See question on Continuing Education credit below.)

To register, go to: <http://nccphp.sph.unc.edu/NCDRNtraining/> and click on "Register Now." You will create an account with a password to access the training on the NC Center for Public Health Preparedness Web site. To start taking the online modules, click on "Access Trainings." Detailed instructions on the steps are provide on the Web page.

## What does the training cost and how do I receive Continuing Education (CE) credit?

While there is no fee for accessing the online modules, there is a \$60 fee for the two hour live, simulation workshop and 6 American Psychological Association (APA) approved CE credits offered by the NC Psychological Association. The CE credits will be awarded after completion of both the 8 online modules and the live workshop.

Please note that free, generic Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are offered through the University of North Carolina, however these CEUs are **not** APA approved. CEUs are available for participants who are not licensed mental health professionals in NC.

## What can I expect after I complete the on-line training?

After completing each online module, including the pre- and post-tests, make sure you have printed the certificate of completion. When you have all 8 certificates, licensed mental health professionals in North Carolina are then eligible to register for the 2-hour Live Simulation Workshop (see below). To register for the workshop, send an email with your name, address, phone, email and NC mental health license number to Elizabeth Cloud at the North Carolina Psychological Association (Email: [ncpaelizabeth@mindspring.com](mailto:ncpaelizabeth@mindspring.com)). She will send the workshop schedule and instructions to register for a workshop. You will need to provide the 8 certificates of completion BEFORE you can attend the workshop. After you attend the workshop, you can receive your continuing education (CE) credits but, even more importantly, you can then join the NC DRN by completing the quick, easy application which will be provided at the workshop.

## What is the purpose of the simulation workshop?

The live simulation workshop focuses on active role play and simulation with disaster scenarios. The workshop provides participants with an opportunity to put what they've learned in Part I into practice. Mental health volunteers who have some practice before real disasters strike are likely to be much more effective than those without any exposure. The live workshops give participants a chance to apply the tools they've been given and become comfortable with them before being thrown into an actual disaster. Even mental health volunteers with extensive experience find practice opportunities to be invaluable.

## Who developed this training?

This online training series was created by members of the North Carolina Disaster Response Network (NC DRN) and was produced and is hosted by the North Carolina Center for Public Health Preparedness at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with support from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## How do I contact the NC DRN?

The NC DRN is a program of the North Carolina Psychological Association in Raleigh, NC. For more information, contact Elizabeth Cloud:

**Phone:** 919-872-1005

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