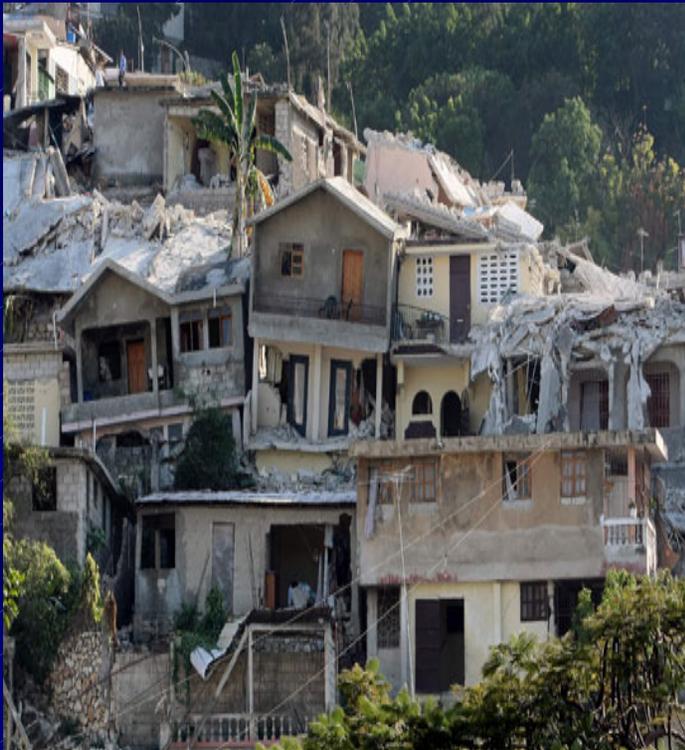


# **Operation Haiti Relief South Florida Health/Medical Response**



**Philadelphia Public Health Forum:  
Current Issues in Public Health  
and Preparedness  
June 4, 2010**

**Jeanne Eckes, RN, MBA  
Region VII RDSTF  
Health/Medical Chair**

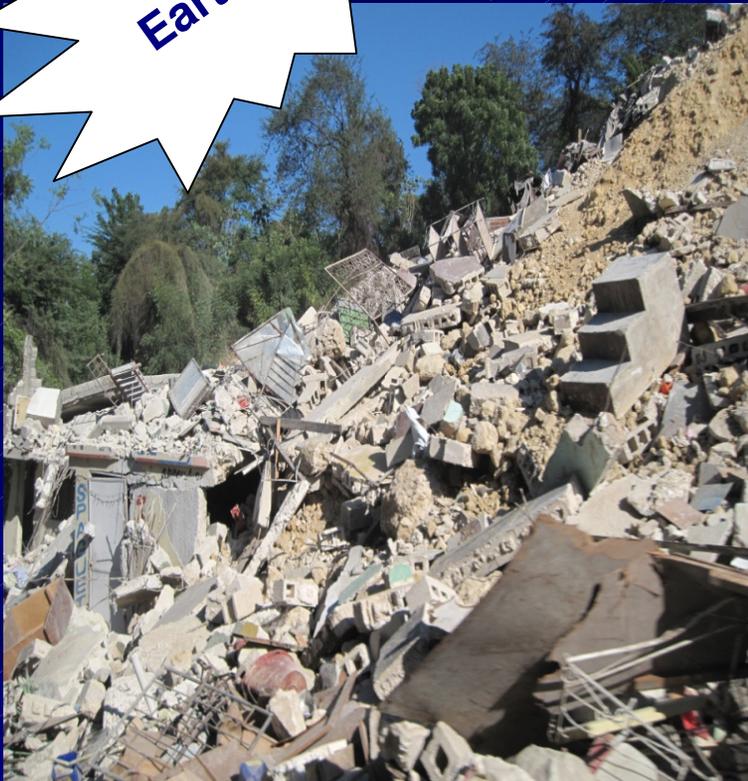


# Republic of Haiti

- Caribbean country – mountainous terrain
- Total area is 10,714 sq mi
- Capital is Port au Prince (PaP)
- Poorest country in the Americas
- Official language is Haitian Creole
- Population 9,035,536 (2009 estimate)

# Haiti – January 12, 2010

Earthquake



- 7.0 Magnitude earthquake
- Struck at 1653 hours EDT
- 6<sup>th</sup> deadliest earthquake (EQ) overall recorded
- Estimated 3M persons affected
  - 230,000 dead
  - 300,000 injured
  - 1M now homeless
  - Many people status is unknown

# Haiti Medical Background



**Ministry of Health**

- Catastrophic effects
  - Destroyed all medical facilities
- Critical infrastructure destroyed
- Multiple US agencies already had teams in Haiti at time of EQ
  - UM Global Institute / Project Medishare
  - Partners in Health (PIH)
  - Other Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

# Initial Haiti Response

- Chaos and confusion in the country
- Not organized – emotional response to a catastrophic incident
- Self deployment of teams from organizations with embedded footprint
- Some casualties immediately removed from Haiti and transported to Cuba via US Coast Guard



# UM Global Institute Project Medishare

- Established teams to respond to Haiti
- Reports from Medishare staff in country - they are transporting 13 patients from Haiti to Ryder Trauma Center
  - US citizens, military personnel, foreign diplomats
  - Coordinating with their international center
  - Communications with SoCom
- Intel reports that thousands will require treatment and care in US



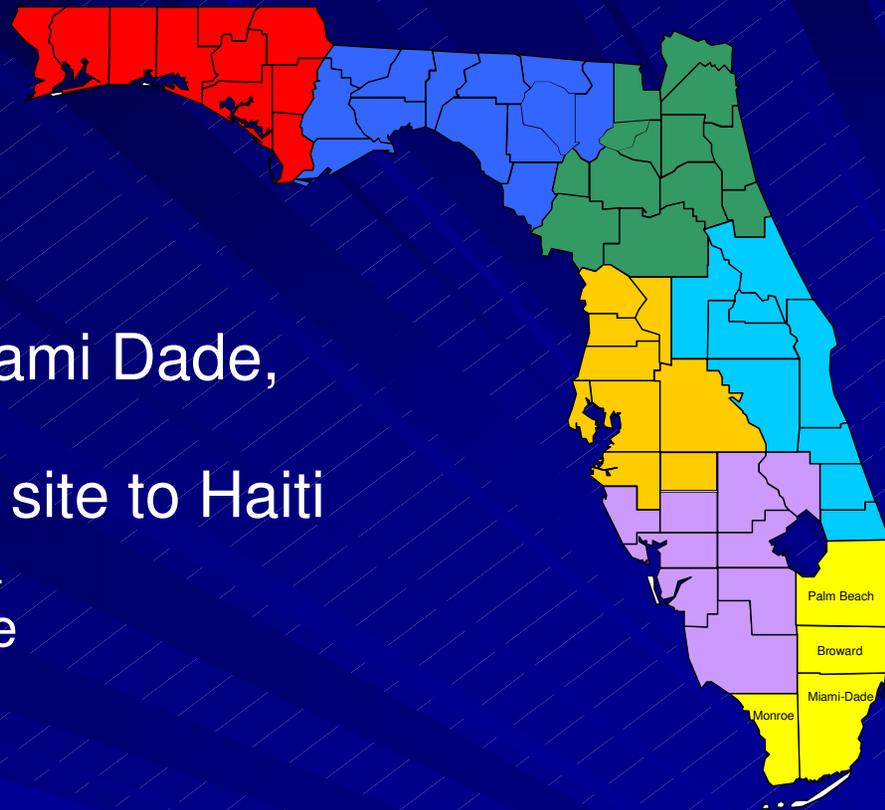
# Local Earthquake Activation

- No Emergency Declarations
  - Federal, State or Local
- Local EOCs have not stood up
  - Monitoring posture only
- Regional intervention required to assist in patient distribution
- **Patients are arriving !!!!**



# Region VII

- Palm Beach, Broward, Miami Dade, and Monroe counties
- Florida is closest CONUS site to Haiti
  - Impact to Southeast Florida
  - 600 miles . 2 hour flight time



- Region VII H/M leadership was with State DOH in Orlando at meetings
  - Access to State was immediate
  - Intel communicated in real time
  - Collaboration began immediately

# Region VII Responds

- Ryder Trauma Medical Director
  - Asks H/M leadership for assistance after arrival of initial flights netting 14 patients
  - Coordination of all Trauma Centers in Region needed
- Department of State – “hospital shopping”
- Received first Haiti EQ victim from on January 13, 2010 at 1710 hours
  - Private air ambulances / Existing international transport agreements
  - GITMO

# Region VII Response

- H/M leadership conference call held -13 Jan
  - Develop strategy to engage the Region's assets
  - Conduct a regional size up
- Regional Conference call held with all H/M partners
  - Provide situational awareness
  - Evaluate bed capacity
  - Announce single POC phone number
- Invited State DOH – ESF #8 to participate

# US Federal Response

- Department of State (DOS)
  - Locate American Embassy personnel and US citizens in Haiti
  - Has authority in international events
    - DOS requested USAID to serve as lead agency for federal response
    - HHS to support the medical operations in Haiti
  - Mission was to be performed in the country of Haiti

# US Transportation Command



- Department of Defense (DOD)
  - US Transportation Command (US TRANSCOM)
  - Transport of US citizens home for repatriation
  - Transport troops and supplies to assist the government and people of Haiti
  
- GPMRC Medical evacuation missions
  - No seat empty when returning to the US
  - Transport to Homestead Air Reserve Base (HARB) and Miami International Airport (MIA)
  - Established critical rapport with Region POC

# Region VII Activation

- Structured Concept of Operations (ConOps) is developed
  - Patient arrival and distribution
  - Single POC phone number in Region
  - Daily conference calls established
- Region VII has limited visibility on all incoming aircraft
  - Private air ambulances continue transports to south Florida
  - TRANSCOM communicates directly with Region POC

# Region VII - By the Numbers

- 85 local, state and federal organizations involved
  - Public and private agencies
- Six airports utilized
  - 22 military flights
  - Unclear exact number of private air ambulance flights occurred
  - Private jets and commercial airlines
- Arrival of casualties to hospitals via multiple routes

# Region VII - By the Numbers

- Patients began arriving 13 Jan 2010
- 563 patients arrived for care post EQ
  - Approximately 671 total patients in the State of Florida
- All patients are pre NDMS activation
  - NDMS activated 2 Feb 2010
  - Upon activation the Tampa and Atlanta Federal Coordination Centers used



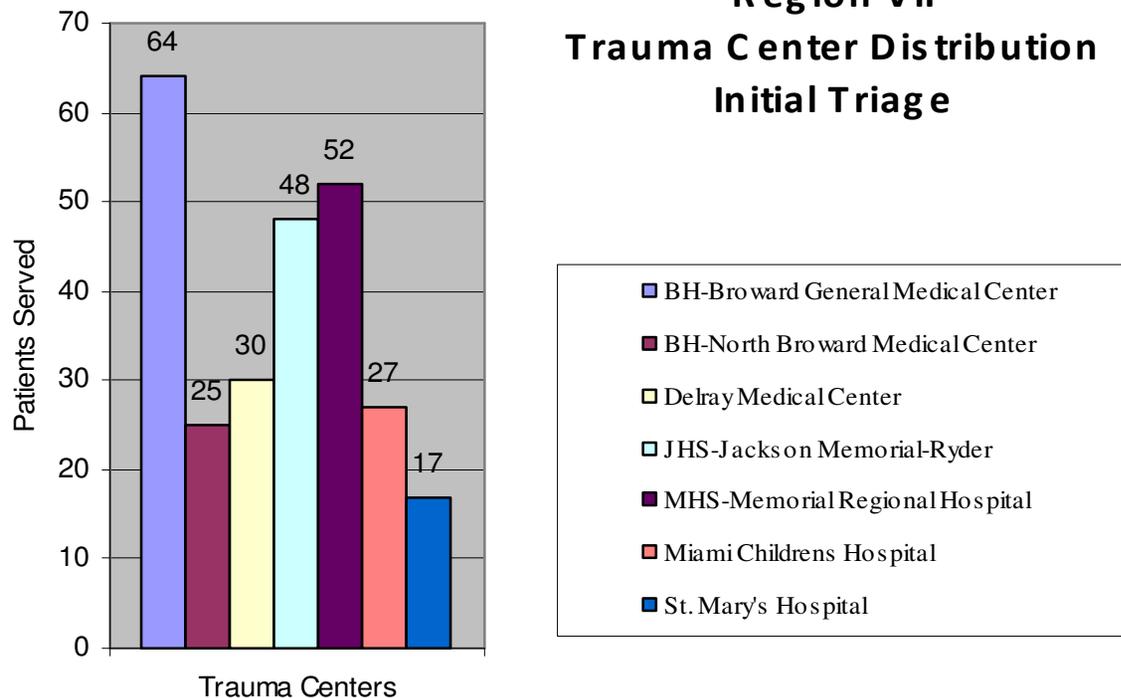
# Injury types – all ages

- Severe polytrauma
- Burns
- Crush
- Amputations
- Spinal cord injuries
  - paralysis
- Closed head injuries
- Dehydration
- Fractures
- Gun Shot Wounds
- Rhabdomyolysis/Renal failure
- Stroke
- Exotic/infectious diseases
  - Malaria
  - Tuberculosis
  - Tetanus
  - Typhoid



# Trauma Center Distribution

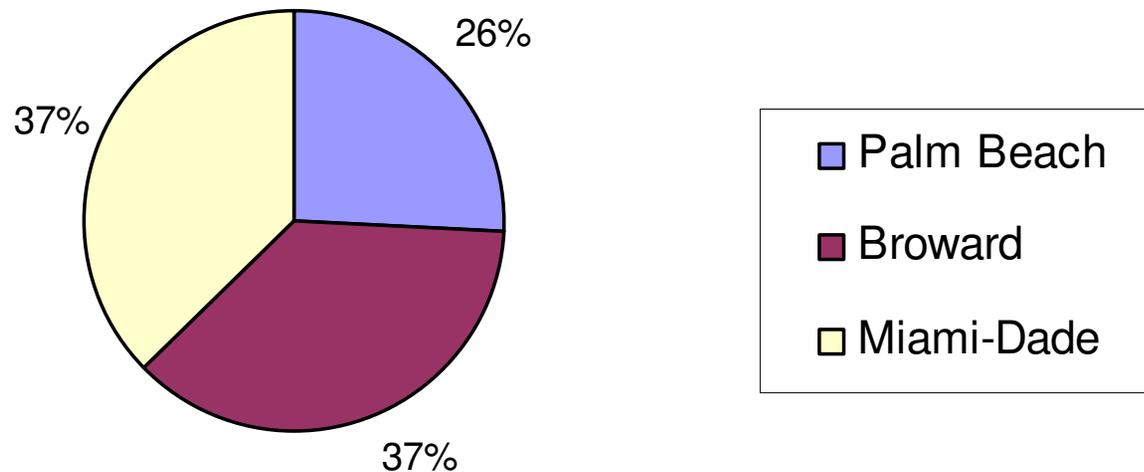
Operation Haiti Relief  
Region VII  
Trauma Center Distribution  
Initial Triage



**Total Patients - N=563**  
**43% - Trauma Centers**  
**57% - Non Trauma Centers**

# County Distribution

## Operation Haiti Relief Region VII Patient Distribution by County



\* No patients were transported to Monroe County

# Keys to Successful Operations

- Leadership
- Pre catastrophic planning with partners
  - Plan development
  - Willingness to succeed
- RDSTF / UASI workgroups
- Knowing the partners prior to this event
  - Met new partners
- Previous training and exercises

# Partnerships – 85 agencies

- Region VII H/M Leadership
- Hospitals
- Law Enforcement
- Emergency Management
- Fire/EMS
- Private Ambulance Companies
- Health Department
- Region VII RERA
- State EOC ESF #8
- State Medical Response Team
- US TRANSCOM
- US Southern Command
- Homestead Air Reserve Base
- FEMA Region IV
- South Florida Hospital Healthcare Association
- Florida Hospital Association
- Florida Crisis Consortium
- Department of Children and Families
- American Red Cross
- Airport Airside Operations
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Transportation Security Administration
- Customs/Border Patrol
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Department of State
- US Coast Guard
- Region IV Burn Coalition

# Lessons Learned – What Worked

- Region H/M leadership is strong
- All facilities / agencies participated and engaged without hesitation
- Communication consistent and accurate
  - **Conference calls**
  - **Pre-planned and scripted agenda**
- Triage and transportation was appropriate
- Preplanning and exercises pays off
- Flexibility and adaptability of all partners
  - Dynamic and fluid plans

# Lessons Learned – What Worked

- Knowing your partners is exceptional
  - Everybody knows somebody
  - Making “new” partners can work in your favor
- JIT plan development can be successful in the absence of a plan
- State ESF - #8 was supportive/assistive
- Creative opportunities were employed when standard procedures did not apply

# Lessons Learned - Opportunities

- Local providers are not clear or well versed in federal plans
- Some plans need revision
  - local, state and federal
- International incidents need to include a domestic component
- Repatriation plan needs revision
  - Include a medical operations/response as part of the plan

# Lessons Learned - Opportunities

- Self deployment remains a challenge
- Reimbursement issues remain
- Long term care needs still unresolved
- Hospitals need to be left to provide care rather than complete data requests
  - Requests for data need to be centralized, consistent and less frequent
- Visibility of inbound flights could improve on the private side

# Lessons Learned - Opportunities

- More planning work needs to be done with federal partners
- Communication between partners can always be improved
  - Inbound flight changes
  - Patient condition information
  - Transfer of information from Region POC to accepting facility and transport agency



# QUESTIONS ?



# THANK YOU

Jeanne Eckes-Roper, RN MBA  
Director of Emergency Preparedness  
Broward Health

Region VII Health/Medical Chair  
Southeast Domestic Security Task Force  
[jeckes@browardhealth.org](mailto:jeckes@browardhealth.org)

954.712.3931