



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Portable Hospitals Enhance Statewide Public Health Response Capabilities

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BURLINGTON – A new 20-bed inflatable portable hospital and a mass care trailer stockpiled with medical and mass care supplies purchased by the Vermont Department of Health was on display Jan. 30 and 31 at the Champlain Valley Exposition in Essex Jct. Hospital and public health responders attended a two-day training session on its functions, set-up, take-down and maintenance.

Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD, Public Health Preparedness Chief Chris Bell, and Peter Coffey, interim director of Vermont Emergency Management discussed the importance of this new medical surge capacity to respond to “all-hazards” public health events and emergencies.

The hospital cost approximately \$157,000 and was purchased with Public Health Emergency Preparedness grant funds awarded to the Health Department from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC).

There are now two portable hospitals in Vermont, including one housed at the Central Vermont Medical Center in Berlin.

“These pop-up hospitals are sophisticated – they have negative pressure capability to isolate people with highly infectious illness, and they are fully equipped to handle most medical needs,” said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD. “They can be set up quickly in an emergency situation where assessment, triage and treatment can save lives, used to temporarily ease a patient overflow situation, or stand up at a large gathering of people.”

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Updated 02/10/12 to correct transposed figure in hospital cost.

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