



Disaster Response experiences with a frail elderly population

Presented by John Bowling, Ph.D.



Population served by Silverado Senior Living

- Frail elderly with diagnosis of dementia
- Assisted Living properties in multiple states
- Limited mobility
- Impaired decision-making
- Also served in private homes dispersed throughout communities

Hurricane Rita

Setting and scenario following Hurricane Andrew debacle



Preparation

- Callback lists of family members, employees on portable flash-drives (system of updates)
- Close and distant evacuation locations
- Prioritization of residents for evacuations
- Agreement with Transport companies
- Zones outside of danger zone for phone communication
- Employees all know assignments/protocols



Should we stay or go...?

- Boarding up of windows
- Key supplies: Chainsaw, generators, fuel, long electrical cords, portable AC
- Propane for barbecue
- Shut off power, water, elec. In heart of storm
- Center staging area for staff, family, residents...



The decision...

- 30 minute updates
 - Hurricane intensity
 - Traffic conditions
 - Building structural integrity



The outcome

- Stories ...
 - Family who came into the center
 - Red Cross request
 - The unfortunate bus accident



Calabasas Fires

- Evacuation readiness:
 - Meds.
 - Water and supplies for bus rides
 - Red Cross cots at destinations
 - ID and system for medical check-in at receiving site



Stay or Go?

- Smoke became a greater threat than actual fire
- Constant communication with emergency personnel, Sheriff's department
- Family member options for transport



Outcome

- 90 residents successfully moved to three separate sites
- No injuries or further medical emergencies
- Stories...
 - Jump from the bus...
 - Goodnight chorus...



Lessons Learned

- What if, what if, what if...
 - Storage locker of supplies was abandoned and locked
 - Nametags were pulled off by residents
 - Use present to make decisions, not past
 - Employee issues at checkpoint
 - Assume communication blackouts
 - Preparation is 99% of success!