



## Department of Health

**ANDREW M. CUOMO**  
Governor

**HOWARD A. ZUCKER, M.D., J.D.**  
Commissioner

**SALLY DRESLIN, M.S., R.N.**  
Executive Deputy Commissioner

Date: May 10, 2019

DAL: DHCBS 19-05

Subject: Emergency Response Drill

Dear Administrator:

The Division of Home and Community Based Services (DHCBS) will conduct an emergency response drill starting on June 11, 2019 and ending on June 13, 2019. All Certified Home Health Agencies (CHHAs), Long Term Home Health Care Programs (LTHHCPs), Hospices and Licensed Home Care Services Agencies (LHCSAs) are required to participate in this drill. Failure to participate will result in a deficiency citation and possible enforcement action. The purpose of this drill is to simulate an emergency event, serving the following purposes:

- To allow providers to implement all aspects of their emergency preparedness plan, document participation and activities conducted, and to evaluate their plan's effectiveness, and for federal providers to execute the required After Action Report;
- To allow providers the opportunity to contact their community partners and test their communication/plan systems. When contacting community partners, the agency should clearly state: "This is an exercise."
- To familiarize providers with the communication methods and information needed by the Department during and after an emergency event which will help agencies develop systems to enable quick access to this information;
- To familiarize providers with the revised survey tool used to collect information- the Health Electronic Response Data System (HERDS) Home Care Emergency Response Survey; and
- To allow the Department to test the communication and data collection systems prior to a real emergency event.

The Health Commerce System (HCS) is the primary means of communication between providers and the Department during emergencies as well as for normal operational issues. All communication between the Department and providers for this drill and during a real emergency will be conducted via the HCS Integrated Health Alert Notification System (IHANS). You will receive notification of the drill and what the nature of the drill will be on June 11, 2019 via IHANS.

To reiterate, participation in the Emergency Drill is **required**. Participation in the Emergency Drill will be monitored by DOH staff. Non-compliant agencies will receive a deficiency citation and possibly enforcement action.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and participation in this Emergency Response drill. If you have questions about this Emergency Drill, or the HERDS Emergency Response survey, please contact: [HCEmergency@health.ny.gov](mailto:HCEmergency@health.ny.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret O. Willard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "M".

Margaret O. Willard, Acting Director  
Division of Home and Community Based Services