

Mobile Health Care Facility Summary

A tornado rips through Anytown, Iowa causing extensive damage to the local hospital. Hospital administration initiates a call to the county Emergency Management Agency (EMA) requesting assistance of personnel and facilities. The county EMA coordinator calls Homeland Security Emergency Management requesting a Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) and a Mobile Health Care Facility. The DMAT is deployed and arrives on scene along with Iowa Department of Public Health's (IDPH) Mobile Health Care Facility to assist the local hospital.

The scenario above describes one of many uses for IDPH's mobile health care facility. Other potential uses could include establishment of special needs shelter, evacuee processing center, immunization clinics, triage/first aid clinic, Public Health Response Team (PHRT) lodging, off-site IDPH command center. Most Hospital Preparedness Program benchmarks require a basic level of preparedness that includes temporary shelters for critical tasks related to bioterrorism and other health care emergency responses. IDPH's Center for Disaster Operations and Response purchased this system to address those needs.

Portability, versatility and expandability are three key points about this emergency response shelter system. The mobile health care facility consists of five 19 ft x 35 ft shelters and two 20 ft octagon shelters. A deployed team has the versatility of using all the shelters or only as many as needed for their situation. In addition, most federal response teams have this same type of system, making Iowa's system compatible should it be necessary for state and federal resources to join forces during an incident.