



# Region IV MRC Update

December, 2008

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## **Acting Surgeon General Encourages Americans to Know Family Health History**

*HHS* - Acting Surgeon General Steven K. Galson, M.D., M.P.H., encourages everyone to use the holidays as an opportunity to discuss, identify and make a record of health problems that seem to run in the family. The Office of the Surgeon General has an updated Web tool to help create that health history.

A carefully constructed family health history may provide insight into disease risks that can be inherited, lifestyles that may affect disease risk, environmental factors, and patient health concerns.

**“Talking about and sharing your own family health history is something you can do right now in order to gain an understanding of your health and the health of family members,”** says Galson. **“It’s a starting point for taking fuller charge of your own health future.”**

**“Tracing the illnesses your grandparents, parents, and additional blood relatives have suffered from can help your health care provider predict diseases and disorders from which you could be at risk,”** Galson said.

Families can use the Web-based tool "My Family Health Portrait." This tool provides consumers with a free and easily-to-use way to assemble their family health information.

Launched in 2004 in partnership with several other agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Surgeon General's Family History Initiative encourages all American families to learn more about their family health history.

Visit the Surgeon General's Web site to learn the importance of knowing about your family's health history <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov>. You can find the "My Family Health Portrait" tool at <http://www.hhs.gov/familyhistory/>.

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## **Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities**

## Regional Conference Details

The Region IV MRC Conference and Training will be held on January 8 and 9 in Jacksonville, FL at the Wyndham Riverwalk. The Conference Planning Committee has been hard at work developing an agenda that will meet the needs of local unit leaders.

Session topics will include:

- MOU Development
- Resource Sharing
- Marketing
- Working with Youth
- Listening: The Key to Effective Partnerships
- Radiation Response and the MRC



This year, attendees will also have three training sessions to choose from:

- Psychological First Aid Overview
- Using MRC-TRAIN to Maximize the Effectiveness of your Training Program
- Preparing our POD Volunteers: An Interactive Workshop for Trainers

In addition, there will be updates from the Program Office and NACCHO, a panel presentation on Hurricane Season 2008, best practice sharing, hot topics roundtables, and other opportunities for networking and sharing. Please contact the Regional Coordinator for more information. Hope to see you there!

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### Useful Tools and Information Online

Just a reminder: There is a collection of websites that may be useful to MRC Unit Coordinators available at: <http://www.furl.net/members/Region4MRC>. Recent additions include:

- [Proposal Writing Short Course](#)
- [Proposal Budgeting Basics](#)
- [Volunteer Management Competencies](#)
- [Rocky Mountain Regional Care Model for Bioterrorist Events](#) (Alternate Care Sites)

For regular public health and emergency preparedness updates, check out the [Region IV News Updates](#)

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### Technical Assistance Assessment Calls

The Regional Coordinator is working on completing the Technical Assistance Assessment Calls for all Region IV MRC units that have been established for more than six months. This is a thirty to forty-five minute phone call discussing the unit's current status, plans for the future, and needs for technical assistance. Please respond promptly when contacted about the Assessment Call. More information is available here: <http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/TAAssessment>

### Upcoming Events of Interest

- December 3, **Deadline for Registering for Region IV Medical Reserve Corps Conference and Training** (contact Regional Coordinator for more information)
- December 11, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET - **Strengthening Public Health Capacity to Serve the Community: Applying Accreditation and Quality Improvement Tools** <http://www.adph.org/alphntn>
- January 8-9, 2009 – Jacksonville, FL – **Region IV Medical Reserve Corps Conference and Training**
- January 29, 2009, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET - **Mass Antibiotic Dispensing: Partnering with Tribal Governments and Communities** <http://www2a.cdc.gov/phtn/tribal/default.asp>
- February 18-20, 2009 - San Diego, CA – **Public Health Preparedness Summit** <http://www.phprep.org/2009/abstract.cfm>
- April 4-8, 2009 – Dallas, TX - **2009 Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness and Response Training Summit** (MRC National Conference) <http://teams.hhs.gov/conference/>

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### Upcoming Health Observances

December 1 is World AIDS Day



<http://www.unaids.org/en/Partnerships/Advocacy+partners/WAC/default.asp>

December 7-13 is National Hand Washing Awareness Week

<http://www.henrythehand.com/>

January is National Blood Donor Month

[http://www.aabb.org/Content/Donate\\_Blood/Donate\\_Blood\\_Public\\_Education\\_Initiatives/National\\_Blood\\_Donor\\_Month/nbdm.htm](http://www.aabb.org/Content/Donate_Blood/Donate_Blood_Public_Education_Initiatives/National_Blood_Donor_Month/nbdm.htm)

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Don't forget to regularly visit the [National MRC Website](#): sponsored by the [Office of the Surgeon General](#)  
Medical Reserve Corps is a partner program with [Citizen Corps](#)