**MI-MORT Meeting Conference Call Minutes**

**March 26, 2020**

**10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

Attendance: Brook Babcock, Dr. Gary Berman, Dr. Todd Fenton, Dr. David Foran, Hanna Fiedlander, Bill Funk, Cana Garrison, Bob Gilbert, Jessica Gould, Patti Lyons, Dr. Brian Murphy, Dr. Maureen Schaefer, Tim Schramm, Katrina Steinsultz, Roger Simpson, Ryan Wilkinson

**Summary of the Bureau’s COVID-19 Response**

* Jessica Gould provided an update on the Michigan COVID19. The Bureau of EMS, Trauma and Preparedness (BETP) staff is in the thick of the response and are extremely busy at this time.
* BETP received a call regarding the MI-MORT Push Packs, which will be pre-deployed within the regions. The Push Packs contain body bags and PPE that are desperately needed at this time. This will allow the trailers to be restocked with new inventory following the COVID19 response.
* There was a call this morning from Southeast Michigan who are working with Emergency Managers and Medical Examiners (MEs) to acquire necessary supplies.
* If there are any specific questions specifically about MI-MORT, remains management or inventory, please contact Jessica Gould at [GouldJ3@michigan.gov](mailto:GouldJ3@michigan.gov).
* Financial updates may be directed to Tera Poag at [PoagT1@michigan.gov](mailto:PoagT1@michigan.gov).
* Tim Schramm updated that in Southeast Michigan, both Beaumont Hospital in Dearborn and Beaumont Hospital in Taylor are using third party vendors to store remains.
* Henry Ford Hospital in Wyandotte contacted Tim Schramm’s Howell Peterson Funeral Home for assistance with storing patient remains. Tim updated Howell Peterson has assisted with the remains of two persons so far. Some family members were asked to self-quarantine and are not listening, which is causing the spread. The state needs to understand the stress their actions put on hospitals right now.
* Jessica received an email from Rick Drummer on time limits for unclaimed remains. The state is working on the legal response on this issue so the bottleneck can move forward.
* Hanna Fiedlander updated the names of the deceased person will still need to be entered in the naming system, especially if left for over a week. Tim Schramm encouraged procedural documents be shared with the Medical Examiners. Jessica will distribute procedures to MEs through the MIHAN.
* MFDA plan for handling remains for both the unclaimed or for family members who may need financial assistance to process. Hanna will get in touch with the Medical Examiners and keep MFDA informed.
* Jessica updated that some Push Packs have been deployed. A question was asked who is deploying the Push Packs. The Healthcare Coalitions or their designees will distribute supplies. The Region 5 Medical Examiner requested Push Pack supplies and distributed supplies within the region.
* Bob Gilbert questioned whether it was a good idea to distribute Push Pack materials right now? Jessica Gould updated that materials in the Push Packs are desperately needed. Jessica was in the process of replacing expired supplies but opted out of additional funding to fund the 2020 functional exercise. The only trailer that received updated supplies was the one in Region 1, or Lansing area. Expired PPE, at this time, is acceptable to use.
* Bill Funk questioned whether the DPMU teams are responsible for moving Push Packs. Jessica said the coalitions are responsible for moving supplies since they need to review contents and move trailers twice a year.
* Medical Examiner (MEs) are not requesting MI-MORT staff at this time, only supplies. Bob Gilbert updated that body bags are heavy and are in the middle of the trailers.
* MFDA is requesting specific funeral guideline.
* Yesterday Governor Whitmer dispersed late night guidelines on pharmacies and unemployment benefits during a press release.

**Postponement of the May Functional Exercise (FE)**

* A functional exercise was scheduled for May 8, 2020. Due to the COVID19 virus, the exercise has been either postponed or cancelled since BETP staff is busy with the response.
* Jessica Gould, Larry Zimmerman, Tim Schramm, Tori Arnold, and Brook Babcock visited the facilities at LCC, which would be excellent for an exercise and should be used in the future, if possible. The exercise was planned for the downtown Lansing facility, not at the West Campus facility.
* One issue in postponing the exercise funding of $10,000 is that funding needs to be spent before the budget period ends, June 30, 2020. There is a possibility of conducting a virtual exercise or in-person module training exercise in June of 2020 is still being considered.
* The functional exercise was going to simulate an activation and response and then break into sections to run through the morgue operations process including paperwork moving going through each section.
* Dr. Maureen Schaeffer questioned whether there could be a funding extension. Jessica said since this funding was from a previous year, there is no extension and the money must be spent or it will be lost.
* Dr. Murphy asked if the funding could be used for the purchase of the Dexis x-ray equipment. Jessica said it was possible, but BETP was still waiting to hear from MSP on whether the equipment request had been accepted.
* The cost of the entire Dexis package was approximately $22,000, or $8,600 for the Dexis sensor.

**DHHS Request for MFDA Plans for a Mass or Influx of Deaths**

* Tim Schramm received an email from Tammy Bair from DHHS asking the Michigan Funeral Directors Association (MFDA) to share mass or influx of deaths mass fatality plans.
* Tim updated Tammy the MFDA is partnering with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MHHS) MI-MORT MI Mortuary Response Team (MI-MORT) and has a Standard of Operations (SOP) Mass Fatality plan that is being finalized. Tammy Bair was asking for the plan from a burial perspective.
* Discussion continued that some family members may not have the financial means to take care of disposing remains and if a process was in place at the state to handle the influx of remains due to the COV19 virus. This issue is important for hospitals and medical examiners. Tim questioned the plan for assistance with the remains at this time. Canna Garrison updated plans are currently under review at the governor’s office to assist with funding for family members.
* How can MI-MORT help if this is a mass fatality event? The MFDA is asking the same questions. Tim updated from the MFDA side, there is obviously a concern for the shortage of PPE for healthcare workers and funeral directors from the FEMA state supplies requisition since suppliers are telling funeral directors supplies of masks, gloves or other equipment won’t be available for at least 2 – 3 weeks. Canna is working on this issue and sent a list of needed supplies to Emergency Management. Ryan Wilkinson assisted with her request. The MSP resource response will be sent to MFDA so there is a central point of contact.
* Yesterday, Tim received a COVID19 assistance request from Tori Arnold of the MI Volunteer Registry (MVR). Jessica said the request went out to all members of the MI Volunteer Registry (MVR), not just members of the MI-MORT team, so it was not MI-MORT team specific.
* Bob Gilbert wanted clarification on the request since he received calls from his DPMU team wanting to know if MI-MORT was being activated.
* Beaumont Dearborn and Beaumont Taylor are double bagging COVID19 remains. Beaumont Taylor had 9 confirmed cases. All COVID-19 deaths are now double bagged. Henry Ford Wyandotte is asking funeral homes if they will store remains.
* Bob Gilbert discussed the previous HIV process. Bob said bodies received at the funeral homes were not confirmed as HIV deaths by the hospitals but were confirmed through interviews with family members.
* Hospitals are filing up fast with confirmed COVID19 cases, with 600 cases in one hospital. Beaumont is no longer accepting COVID19 patients and is sending them to other hospitals. Henry Ford hospitals have 304 confirmed cases, with another 107 patients waiting confirmation. Henry Ford hospitals have tested nearly 1700 patients, with 1200 confirmed.
* U.S. Representative Debbie Dingell conducted a Town Hall meeting last night with hospital CEOs to discuss the response yesterday.

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| **Action Item** | **Owner(s)** | **Deadline** | **Status** |
| Summary of the Bureau’s COVID-19 Response - Push Pack Distribution | Regional Leadership  BETP | As soon as possible  As soon as possible | Distribute Push Pack PPE and body bags  Assist MFDA as requested |
| Postponement of the May Functional Exercise (FE) | BETP | As soon as possible | Determine where $10,000 exercise funding will be dispersed by June 30, 2020 |
| MHHS Request for MFDA Plans for Mass or Influx of Deaths | BETP/MI-MORT Command Staff | As soon as possible | Finalize MI-MORT Standard Operations Procedures (SOP) Mass Fatality Plan |