**Send questions to**

[**Carolyn.Phillips@gatech.edu**](mailto:Carolyn.Phillips@gatech.edu)

[**www.passitoncenter.org**](http://www.passitoncenter.org/)

**AT/DME Disaster Response Call with PiDS, Portlight and**

**Pass It On Center**

**Sept. 1, 2017, 5:00 pm EDT**

**Calls will continue at this number daily at 4 PM CT/ 5 PM EDT:**

[**641-715-3580**](tel:641-715-3580)**; PIN: 996329#**.

**Carolyn Phillips, Moderating**

**Quick FEMA update from earlier call today.**

A Disability Integration cadre of 47 members has deployed some to Denton (for a work base), some to Austin (not set up yet), one to Houston. They are now going to shelters to assess the situation. They have ASL interpreters. Registration for FEMA disaster aid: Individual households: 813,753 have contacted FEMA; 400,000 eligible.

109,000 approved; $69 million approved.

Transitional hotel rooms: 80,000 households eligible

Total shelters -- 245; pop. 35,207 (452 of those in LA)

**Alerts.** There is now flooding in Nashville, was a tornado in Alabama and Irma - an Atlantic hurricane with the possibility of affecting the U.S. within two weeks. Be mindful of all of this as we make plans.

**Need for AT | DME tracking requests.** A portal is being designed for national tracking. John Wilbanks with Portlight is coordinating the development. The developers project completion by Tuesday, with fairly robust features and the option for further development. It will capture individual needs and will be capable of sorting those by city, county, and state.

**People with Alternative Communication Needs.** USAAC had a successful role in helping people impacted by Katrina. Sarah Blackstone chairs the USAAC emergency recovery efforts. USAAC focuses on helping AAC users and their families. Their website has a place to log needs or donations for Harvey. This was used to respond to a very large fire recently. They will be able to respond to logged needs by matching with them with organizations or donations. It is monitored daily by USAAC. (Carolyn will ask AMAC colleagues to check the accessibility.) USAAC has identified people on the ground in Texas to work with the response effort. One of the manufacturers of SGD (P-Romich) has donated $10,000 and created a $10,000 challenge to other manufacturers. USAAC also has SLPs who will help us with this.

<https://harveyaac.recovers.org/>

**Great Survey Example for Identifying Needs.** Mary Jane set up the survey initially to identify needs of people with autism. Then ARC of Greater Houston joined, and others were added. Each organization was given a separate link to the survey.

**Jamie Karam, LATAN**. The Wheelchair Needs after Disaster was forwarded to Trish and Carolyn to be used in the Shelter Kit to assess needs for wheelchairs. She also has a similar tool to train volunteers to measure and match for other devices.

**Training Resources and Kit for Volunteers Identifying Needs in Shelters**. Trish Redmon reported that a preliminary list of items for the toolkit has been developed, and will be reviewed with the OT volunteers who will work in the shelters.

**Transportation and Shipping**. Ruth Rust from FODAC confirmed the process requires connection with the state VOAD. Portlight has made funds available to assist with shipping.

We don’t want to have people sending equipment that is not needed, or equipment that has not been refurbished and sanitized.

We need a warehouse to which equipment can be shipped. Portlight is currently shipping devices to United Spinal.

**Janet Thomason at**Project C.U.R.E. Houston can start receiving DME equipment for this project.  We will start at a cap of 12 pallets of items, let me know when we need to add more.

We will need to make sure to specify that Project C.U.R.E. is partnering with Us to facilitate the distribution of goods (i.e. we are not donating goods that we already have).

Idea - If we need an emergency overflow/additional space, we should be able to get trailers which we can store in our parking lot.  These only cost:

53 ft. $300/4 weeks

48 ft. $200/4 weeks

45 ft. $165/4 weeks

27 ft. $145/4 weeks

$80 drop off and pick up fee.

**Delivery should be made to:**

Project C.U.R.E.

Houston Recovery Project (or appropriate tagline)

[8303 Kempwood Drive](x-apple-data-detectors://5)

[Houston, TX  77055](x-apple-data-detectors://5)

Deliveries should call to notify if greater than one pallet

Contact: Janet Thomason [832-677-5175](tel:832-677-5175)

Deliveries are accepted [until 2 pm Monday](x-apple-data-detectors://7)- Friday.

**Volunteers.** We have PTs, OTs and Rehab Engineers. Hannah asked how AT and medical professionals should volunteer to work in the area. Jamie Karam suggested that we use the voluntary registration in each state. PIOC will address that. Hannah should email Carolyn at [Carolyn.phillips@gatech.edu](mailto:Carolyn.phillips@gatech.edu). Information will be posted to the Pass It On Center website at [www.passitoncenter.org](http://www.passitoncenter.org/).

Linda Litzinger from TX Parent to Parent has identified volunteers for the shelters. If you want to be on the distribution list for the meeting reports, send your e-mail address to Carolyn.

What is the timeline to activate volunteers for the shelter work? This will be discussed further in calls over the weekend. We expect this need to last for a long time. Amy Goldman pointed out that we may not identify all of the needs through shelters, but some will be identified after people leave the shelter. Soon there will be Disaster Recovery Locations where people can go to identify their needs.

We are waiting to get access to the shelters.  Jamie Karam has an arrangement with the Red Cross shelters in Louisiana. They also have arrangements to gain access to the state shelters. Contact Jamie Karam at LATAN if access is needed in Louisiana.

**Collecting AT| DME | Medical Supplies:**

Carolyn: We need A lot of equipment and supplies to support folks in Texas and Louisiana. As we mobilize and organize - we need everyone to continue collecting right now to help within their communities-  AT, AAC, durable medical equipment, and medical supplies. We need these items to be organized, inventoried, sanitized (when appropriate) and ready to be shipped. Please, Position your organization to be ready to respond.

Joni and Friends has offered to bring 275 minimum wheelchairs to the Houston area.

Little Lobbyists has partnered up with [Trach Mommas of Louisiana](http://www.trachmommas.org/), [Protect TX Fragile Kids](http://www.protecttxfragilekids.org/), [The Parker Lee Project](http://www.theparkerleeproject.org/), [Advocates for Medically Fragile Kids NC](https://www.advocatesformedicallyfragilekidsnc.com/home), and [Moms of Trach Babies](http://www.momsoftrachbabies.com/) to help out to collect pediatric medical supplies and are connecting with local families and organizations in and around the Houston area so that supplies can be distributed to the children who need them.

Carolyn: Excellent! Thank you all! We need to continue communicating and want to avoid duplication of efforts.

**Issues that have been addressed:**

**Texas has a waiver for SLPs** who are licensed in other states allowing them to work without a Texas license. We want to confirm whether other professions have the same option.

Linda Jaco sent a document to Carolyn just prior to the meeting. It also addresses special provisions made for this particular disaster.

**Equipment Loan.** We want to ensure that this equipment is considered a long-term loan. We don’t want to create barriers to acquiring new equipment.

**Questions from Partners:**

How can people in other states help? Massachusetts is ready to help. What should they do to get equipment ready to go? Ensure that all devices are in working order (gently used or new), preferably no more than three years old. Devices should be sanitized before shipment. The donors should check to make sure that there is a need for the device. They should be clearly identified with size, and features: seatbelt, anti-tip.

**Updates from Partners:**

Texas ALS is providing emergency financial assistance to people with ALS who are forced to evacuate their homes for safer accommodations. They are prepared to provide financial assistance for hotel accommodations and other safer settings. Our team across the state has been actively reaching out to approximately 220 people with ALS and their families in the affected areas.

They are in the process of setting up a staging facilities in and around the Houston area that will store necessary medical equipment, respiratory needs, nutrition, and personal care items for people with ALS.

They have received word that their Texas ALS office building in Houston has flooded, and we anticipate that our durable medical equipment storage facility will also be flooded.

**Closing remarks:**

Marcie Roth and Carolyn thanked everyone for their efforts. Everyone’s time and efforts are needed and wanted.

We look forward to talking with you tomorrow at 4 PM CT to move forward, as well as, get and share updates!

We have made significant progress since Wednesday. Thank you, all. Stay safe.