

2009 Pandemic H1N1: Emergency Volunteers Respond

Jee Kim, MPH

Public Health Emergency Volunteer Project Coordinator

County of Los Angeles – Department of Public Health

jeekim@ph.lacounty.gov



LOS ANGELES COUNTY CHALLENGES

- Geography
 - Over 4,000 square miles
 - Mountain ranges to valleys
 - Deserts to oceans, beaches, ports
- Demographics
 - Over 10 million residents
 - 224 distinct languages spoken
 - Uninsured Adults: 28%
 - Poor or fair health: 22%
 - Unemployment: 11%
 - High school graduation: 60%
 - Not proficient in English: 27%



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

- Recognized early
 - Only 4000 Public Health Employees
 - Plans for Volunteers to staff PODs
 - Just-in-Time Training of volunteers
 - MRC Los Angeles started in 2003
 - 2005 Operation Chimera Exercise
- Improvements Recognized
 - Better systems, organization, structure needed for incorporating volunteers into response
 - Puzzle pieces need to fit together



VOLUNTEER INFRASTRUCTURE

- Restructured MRC Los Angeles – 2007
- 2 ESAR-VHP systems merged into one
 - Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV) – June 2009
- MRC and ESAR-VHP working together in LA
 - MRC Los Angeles
 - Beach Cities Health District MRC
 - Long Beach MRC
 - LA County Surge Unit (ESAR-VHP unit)
- MRC & ESAR-VHP Annual Training - 2009



CHALLENGES OF H1N1

- Planning to moving target
 - Vaccine
 - Priority Groups
 - Changes in recommendation
- Used results of Modeling
 - Diminish Attack Rate at 30% - 50% vaccinated
- Push & Pull Strategies used
 - Pull = PODs



CHALLENGES OF COORDINATING VOLUNTEERS

- 254 PODs scheduled → 109 PODs Conducted
 - Planned for 56 staff per POD (28 Clinical/28 Non-Clinical)
 - 12,000+ Staffing
- Negotiating Staffing Assignments and Requests
- Tracking Assignments
- First Activation and Deployment of Volunteers
 - MRC Los Angeles (DPH) & LA County Surge Unit (EMS)
- Other volunteer groups and unaffiliated individuals
 - We want to help. How do I help?
- Liability Issues

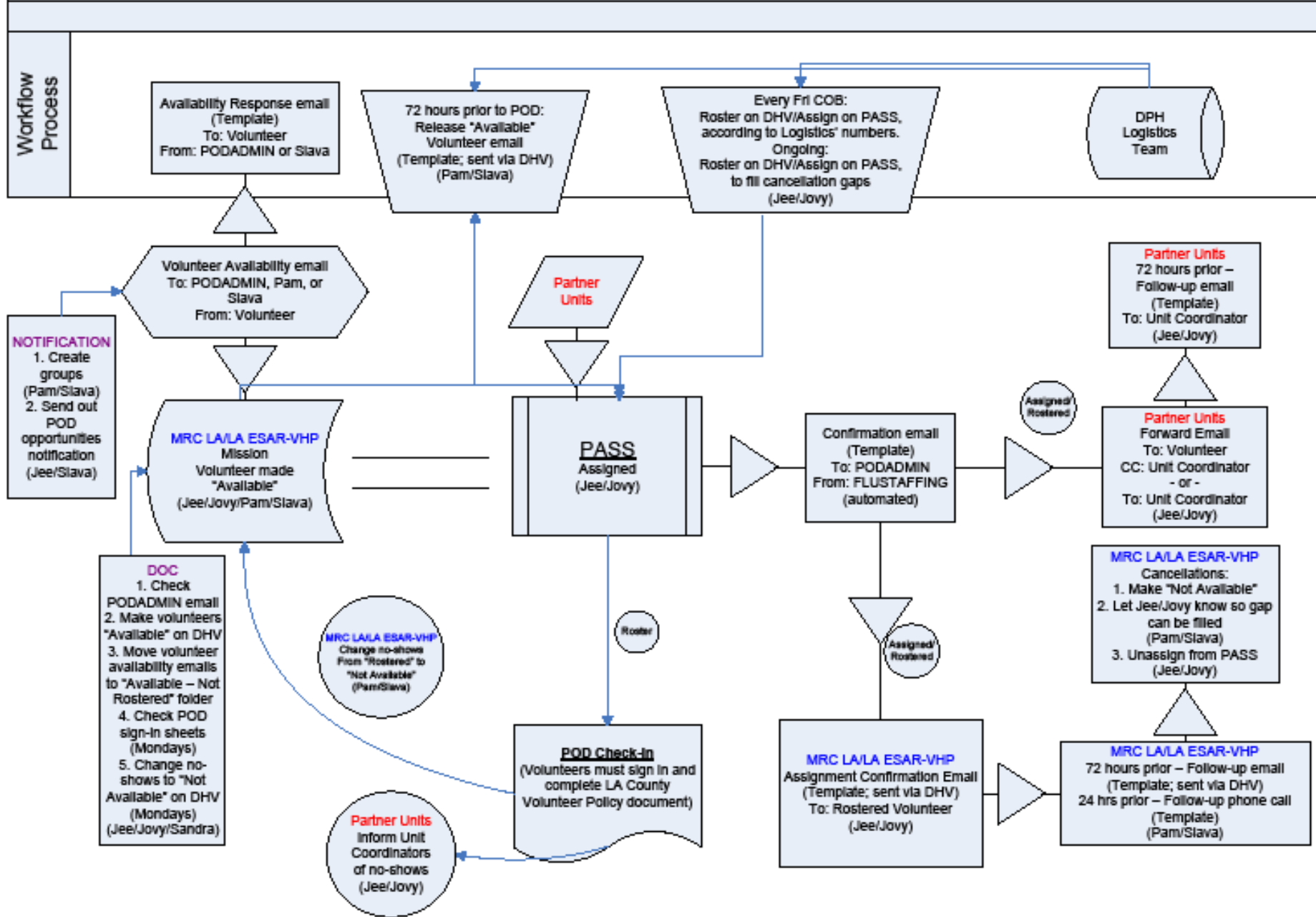


MEETING THE CHALLENGE

- Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV)
 - Mission Manager used to assign and track volunteers
 - License Verified for Clinical Volunteers
- Coordinated with other volunteer groups through Unit Coordinator
- Unaffiliated individuals referred to DHV
- Created Deployment Procedures
 - Included interfacing with DPH assignment and tracking system (PASS)
- Emergency Liability Coverage Provided



POD Volunteer Availability & Assignment (MRC LA, LA ESAR-VHP, Partner Units)



MEETING THE CHALLENGE: TRAINING VOLUNTEERS

- 3 Saturday trainings offered
 - POD Overview
 - Roles and Responsibilities in PODs
 - Vaccine Administration Skills
Assessment/Demonstration for licensed
volunteers only
- 334 volunteers trained
- Online Training Available



RESULTS: VOLUNTEERS RESPOND

- MRC Los Angeles
 - Availability = 304
 - Assigned = 145
 - Supported 67 PODs
 - 1268 Hours
 - Contributed over \$50,000 of service
- LA County Surge Unit
 - Availability = 90
 - Assigned = 32
- Partner Agencies
 - Availability = 152
 - Assigned = 35





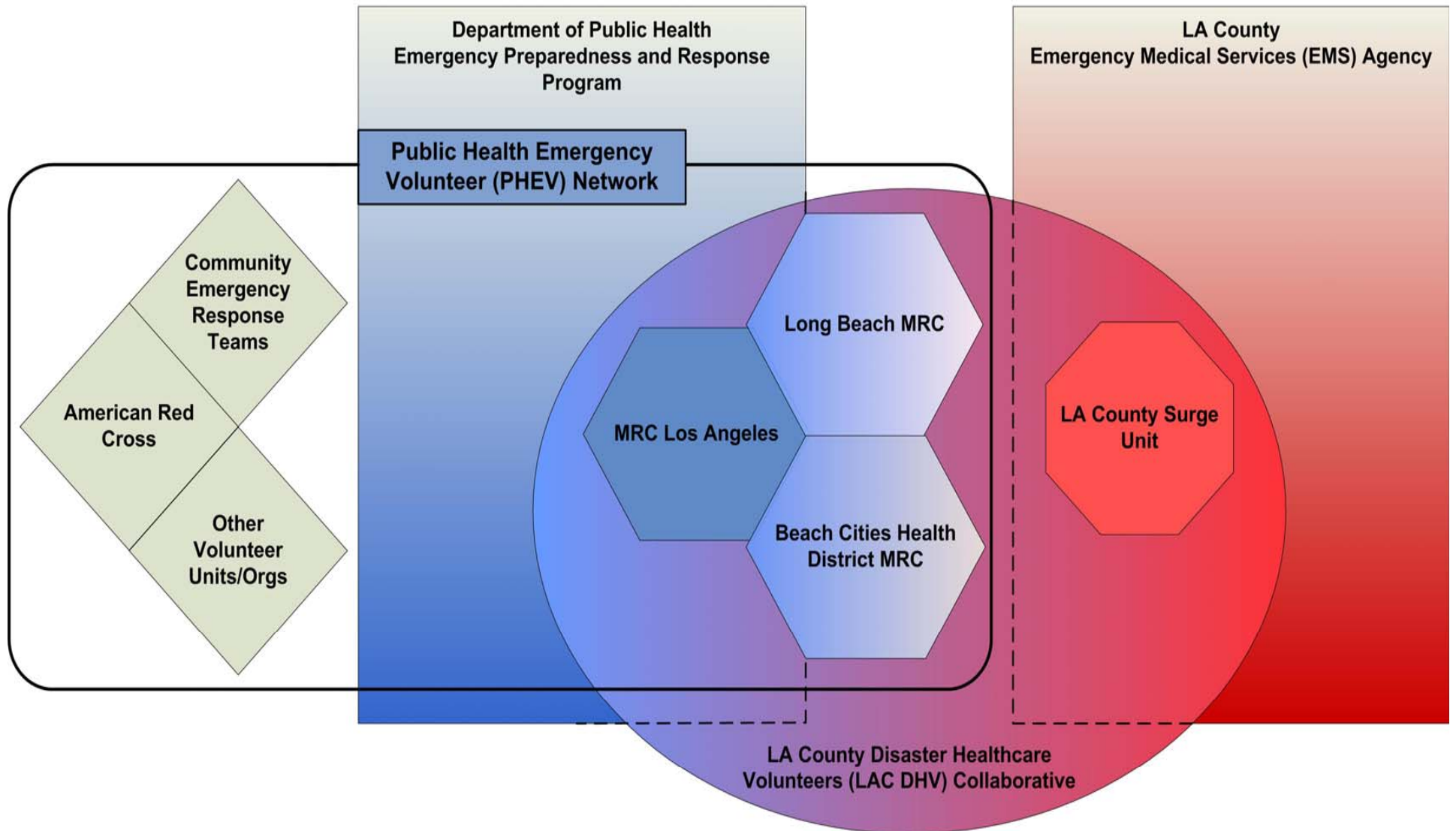
IMPROVEMENTS SINCE H1N1

- LA County DHV Collaborative (Official Charter)
 - Deployment Operations Manual
 - Annual Training and Exercise
- Public Health Emergency Volunteer Network
 - Building a Network of Community Volunteer Units
- MRC Los Angeles
 - Deployment Procedures
 - Added Mock POD Activity
 - Drills and Exercise Involvement



County of Los Angeles – Department of Public Health
Emergency Preparedness and Response Program

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY VOLUNTEER (PHEV)



IMPROVEMENTS IN PROGRESS

- Involvement of Office of Administrative Deputy in Logistics Section and Staffing Branch
- Central Coordination of Volunteers in Emergencies
- Plans specifically addressing utilization of volunteers
 - Explicit procedures for tracking staff onsite
 - Limitation & utilization of volunteers
- Culture shift regarding MRC Los Angeles and Emergency Volunteers
- Ensuring Liability Coverage
- Policy Development

