

Dear Rural Health Clinic Director:

During the last three years, the Louisiana Hospital Association, Research & Education Foundation (LHA) in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals and the Louisiana State University system has been administering the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Grant. The HRSA grant has been used by hospitals and pre-hospitals to strength their emergency preparedness capabilities. In the light of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the state recognized the importance of coordinated efforts among hospitals, pre-hospitals and primary health care clinics.

In an effort to strengthen healthcare response throughout the state, Dr. Rosanne Prats, HRSA Grant Principal Investigator and DHH Emergency Preparedness Director cordially invites you to attend our upcoming regional planning meetings. The first round of regional planning meetings for 2006 will begin February 17, 2006. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss regional surge plans for critical care beds, trauma and burn care, and the pandemic flu. The agenda will include identifying alternative care sites and developing mutual aid agreements for the transfer of equipment, pharmaceuticals and patients during a disaster. Participants will also breakout into groups to discuss issues and recommendations on how to improve upon communications, transportation, mass treatment, public health, and emergency operations management.

We are asking you to please send a representative from your clinic to ensure that you are included in plans that are being developed for your region. Representatives from the hospitals, parish Offices of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness, Emergency Medical Services and Public Health, along with the Designated Regional Coordinators (DRCs) and the Designated Regional Hospital (DRH) representatives will be in attendance. So please come and learn more about what is being developed for your region!

The schedule of meeting dates is attached below. For more specific information or questions that you may have, please contact the HRSA staff at 225-928-0026 or your Designated Regional Coordinator (DRC). DRC contact information is also attached below.

Sincerely,