

***Nebraska Disaster  
Behavioral Health:  
the first 72 hours***

2008 BT Symposia Series  
Behavioral Health  
Breakout Session



*Nebraska Disaster Behavioral Health*

# Disaster Behavioral Health

- Behavioral Health
  - Mental health
  - Substance abuse
- Anticipate and prepare to address the ***Psychological, Emotional & Social*** consequences of disaster/large emergencies



# Disaster Behavioral Health

- Primarily directed toward assisting with common reactions to disaster
  - “Normal” responses to an abnormal situation
- Identify people experiencing social or psychological impairment



# Phases of Disaster



# Assumptions

- Most responses are local and unfunded, creating a heavy reliance on volunteers
- Nebraska's state plan for behavioral health provides an organizing structure to link activities across the state
- The plan is available at:
  - [www.disastermh.nebraska.edu](http://www.disastermh.nebraska.edu)



# Nebraska's model

- Local Response
  - Behavioral health workers respond at the local level
- Regional Coordination
  - All efforts should complement existing service systems
- Statewide Planning
  - University of Nebraska Public Policy Center is under contract to provide technical assistance and coordination on behalf of the state



# Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team

- The Nebraska Emergency Management Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. 81-829.36 to 81-829.75) provides statutory authorization for the formation and use of State Emergency Response Teams
- Discussion is underway about creating this resource for behavioral health



# Disaster Behavioral Health Workforce

	ARC	CISM	FEMA	Local Region
Persons Served	ARC Workers Clients	First Responders	Survivors in the area	Everybody else
Workers Used	Lic MH Prof	MH Prof & Peers	Trained Indigenous Workers	Locally Determined
Phase of Disaster	Response	Response	Recovery	Preparedness, Response, Recovery

For the local Preparedness, assume a Response capacity that operates for 72 hours before national resources arrive

ARC means American Red Cross / CISM means Critical Incident Stress Management Program

FEMA means Federal Emergency Management Agency (Crisis Counseling Program)



# **ESAR-VHP**

## **Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals**



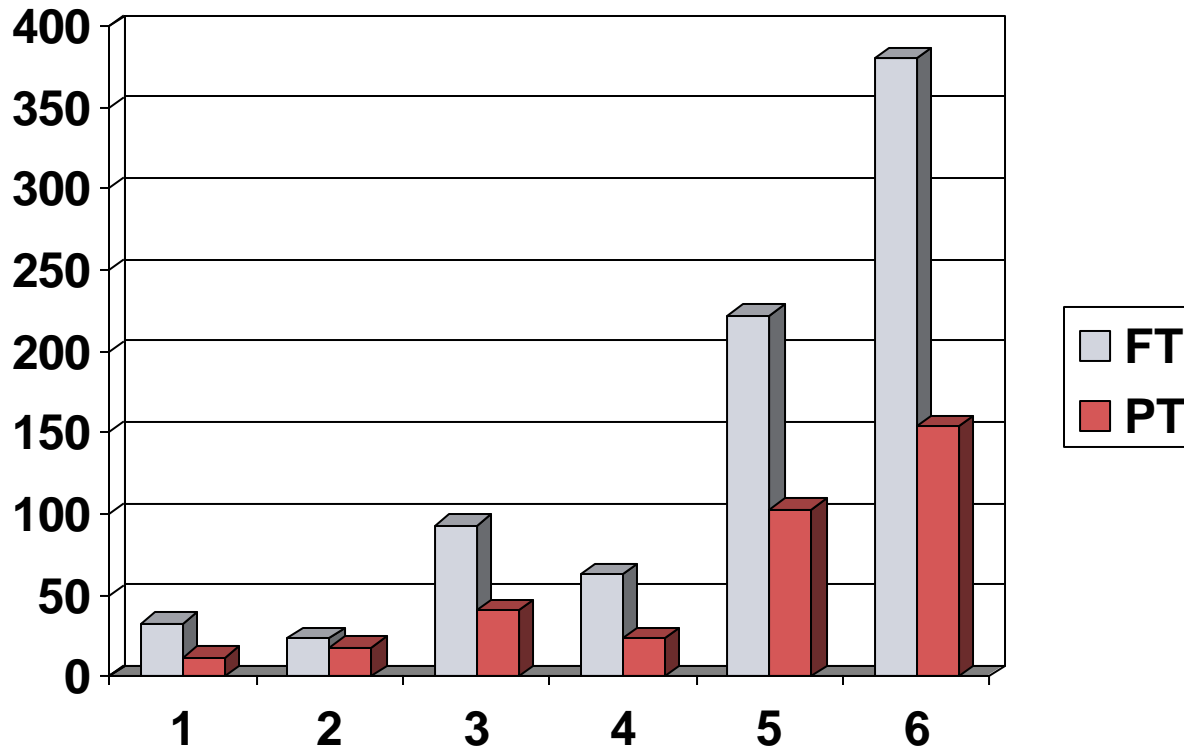
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## What is **ESAR-VHP**

- ◆ Electronic database of healthcare workers.
- ◆ System includes verifiable, up-to-date information regarding the volunteer's identity, licensing, credentialing, accreditation, and privileging in hospitals or other medical facilities.



# Behavioral Health Workforce



Most behavioral health professionals are in the East

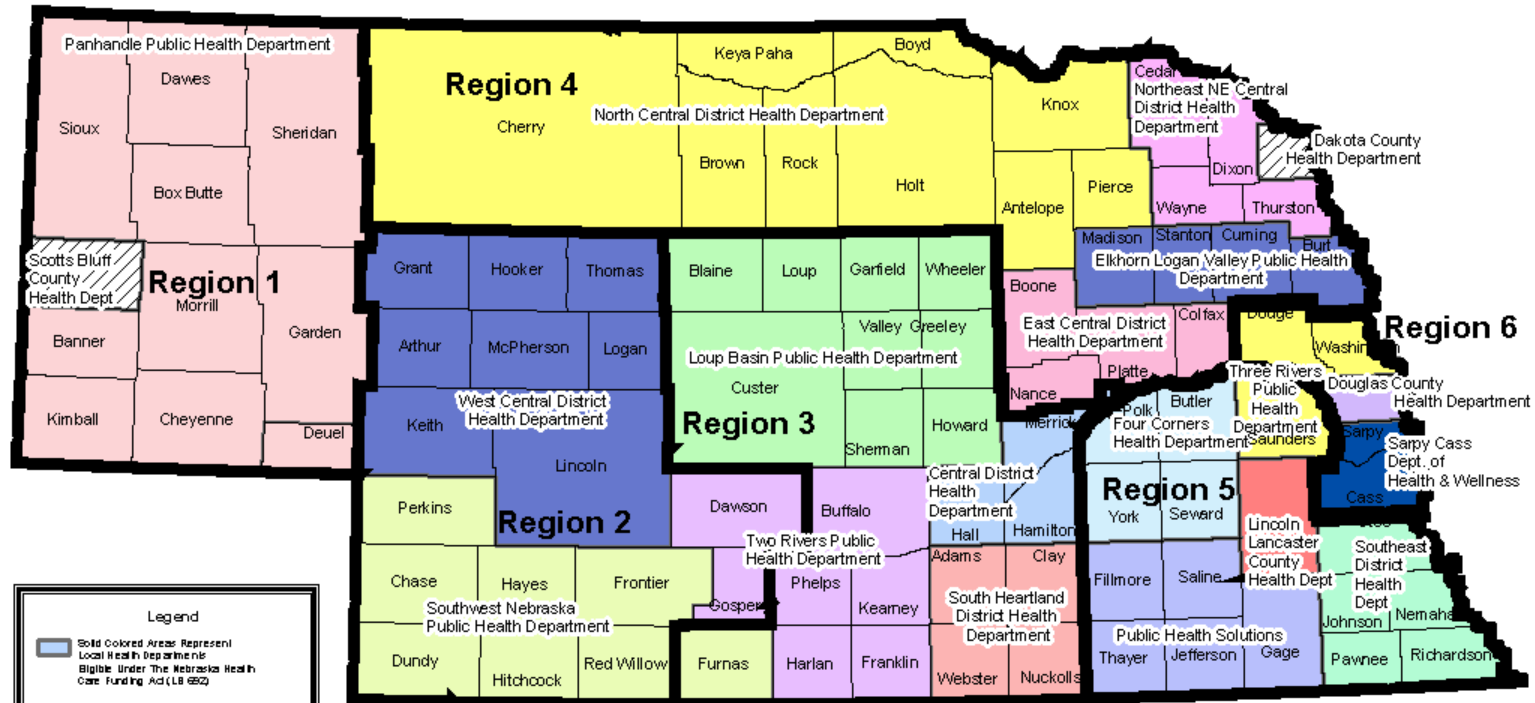
Health Professions Tracking Center © 2007

# Behavioral Health Workforce

- Psychological First Aid
  - Can be done by anyone
  - Response or recovery tool
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
  - Evidence based treatment for distress related to disaster/trauma
  - Limited to clinicians during recovery



# Behavioral Health Regions and Local Health Departments



Nebraska

July 2004

\*LB 692 passed during the 2001 Legislative Session and provides funds to qualifying local public health departments.

Office of Public Health  
Nebraska Department  
Health & Human Services System  
402-471-0191

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# Behavioral Health – the first 72 hours

- Protect, Connect, Direct
  - Safety first; protect from harm associated with being exposed to disaster scenes
  - Connect people with natural supports
  - Direct people to resources that can help
- Assess
  - Identify emerging individual and community behavioral health needs



# **Regional Plan**

## **– the first 72 hours**

- Region 6 is contacted by Emergency Management, Public Health, or Red Cross
- Supervision and Accountability is determine by BH at the EOC
- Volunteers are activated through the MRC
- Data is collected to determine future/long term response



## **For more information**

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