

# Just the Facts

WYNN HOSPITAL

Each week, "Just the Facts" provides information about a key aspect of the Wynn Hospital being built by Mohawk Valley Health System (MVHS). It is designed to keep our medical staff, employees and volunteers updated and to share with family, friends and neighbors so we keep our community informed about how we're transforming healthcare in our region.



## TOPIC FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2023:

### ***How will MVHS handle potential disasters, natural and man-made, at the new Wynn Hospital?***

As we have seen in recent news stories, disasters, both natural and man-made, happen more often than anyone would like. In order to stay ready for potential disasters, MVHS, like hospitals nationwide, has professionals on staff who are dedicated to emergency preparedness plans and preparations for these situations. We have plans in place, conduct drills for any number of potential disasters and train our staff members on a regular basis to ensure that we are prepared. These plans include procedures for ensuring continued care for patients, potential evacuation of patients, sheltering in place, tracking patients and staff during an emergency and being prepared to take care of community members affected by the situation.

And, we don't do this alone. Our plans and training are done in cooperation with state, regional, county and city agencies like state and public health departments, fire and police departments, first responders and emergency management systems as well as other hospitals in our region. We conduct at least three to four hospital-initiated drills each year, including active shooter drills, and participate in many other community-wide emergency preparedness drills. In fact, MVHS will participate in a region-wide mass casualty drill later this month that will include participation from fire and emergency services, NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) and State and County Emergency Preparedness teams. And, on April 1, we will be participating in a "table top" drill related to potential train derailments with agencies from Herkimer and Oneida Counties. The goal of the table top drill is to prepare for an in-person drill later this spring.

MVHS emergency preparedness plans adhere to federal guidelines and requirements and we also learn from our colleagues throughout the state and nation. In relation to recent disasters in the news, we will work with emergency preparedness teams from those areas to gather information, find out lessons learned and take away any information that could help in the event something similar happens in our area.

The development of disaster preparedness plans and training for any number of potential situations are a key part of the move to the Wynn Hospital in Downtown Utica. Given the new location and building, a hazard risk assessment was done to ensure that our plans, policies and procedures address any additional or different priority risks. In relation to the Wynn Hospital, we have heard concerns expressed about potential flooding, fires, train accidents and how and where we would evacuate patients. Our plans address all of these situations and we have agreements in place with other hospitals in our region in the case of an evacuation, as they do with us.

In the case of an evacuation of the Wynn Hospital in response to a hazardous situation, Incident Command would be called and we would follow our Emergency Preparedness Plan. Additionally, the hospital would reach

out to both county and state level health and emergency preparedness departments for coordination and assistance.

Both natural and man-made disasters, by their nature, are unpredictable. But, MVHS maintains our strong commitment to be prepared for all eventualities to the best of our ability, and we will continue to update our plans, conduct drills and train our staff to do all that we can to protect patients, employees, volunteers and medical staff members and to be ready to take care of our community members during a disaster.