

ANNUAL REPORT



AzCHER

ARIZONA COALITION FOR
HEALTHCARE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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Executive Summary

The Arizona Coalition for Healthcare Emergency Response (AzCHER) FY 2022 annual report summarizes activities from 07/01/21 to 06/30/22 related to its mission to ***unify Arizona's healthcare and public health systems for the continual development and improvement of relationships, plans, and actions that meet the needs of the Whole Community before, during, and after emergencies.***

Some of the FY'22 highlights:

- During FY 2022, the Coalition continued to meet its overall goal to have representation and engagement from each core member type (hospital/healthcare, public health, emergency management, and EMS), as dictated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Preparedness and Response, Hospital Preparedness Program.
- AzCHER staff continued to lead the Coalition's COVID-19 response efforts by hosting situational awareness calls to ensure continuity with public health, hospitals, emergency management and EMS. Additionally, the team coordinated logistics for hand sanitizer and PPE donations, unique patient transports, and various medical equipment and supply resource requests.
- We conducted AzCHER's largest healthcare full scale exercise for our members and partners, including state, county, and tribal public health and emergency management.
- We developed the first mobile app to assist membership in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. Other coalitions across the country are looking into developing or recreating our app for their coalition.
- We have developed the first coalition Hospital Emergency Response Training (HERT) program across the country. This is a collaboration with multiple hospital organizations and tribal entities with support from the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Center for Domestic Preparedness.
- AzCHER convened our 2nd Annual Conference focused on Collaboration, Coordination, and Cooperation. It was AzCHER's first in-person event in almost 2 years and we welcomed over 90 attendees.

"On behalf of the AzCHER team, we want to thank our members, partners, and stakeholders for their collaboration in these challenging times. We look forward to growing our relationships and building resilience in Arizona's healthcare community!"

--Robin Oothoudt, Executive Director

Risk Assessments

Shawna Murphy & Brianna Rooney | azcher.org/chva-rga/

From October 2021 to January 2022, AzCHER conducted a Community Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (CHVA) and Resource Gap Analysis (RGA), a process for each region of Arizona's statewide healthcare coalition to aggregate organizational perceptions of hazard vulnerabilities and resource gap by weighing them with population-based, regional context. This information is critical to uncovering planning and resource vulnerabilities relative to the community needs that could impede the delivery of medical care and health care services during an emergency.

In 2020, AzCHER completely revamped their hazard assessment by combining it with the resource gap analysis, resulting in a new survey administered to members. Since then, the Coalition has continued to build upon its success by editing the survey questions to best capture the needs of our members. Upon publication of the summary report on AzCHER's website, other healthcare coalitions, such as Florida and Minnesota, have reached out asking to borrow or adapt our survey and CHVA tool. A new survey will be released in October 2022, followed by the recruitment of work groups representing each unique healthcare sector and partners.



2021-22 CHVA-RGA Highlights

- 198 member organizations surveyed
 - 11 public health agencies
 - 8 emergency management organizations
 - 6 emergency medical service agencies
 - 42 hospitals
 - 127 healthcare facilities
 - 4 state organizations
- 62 regional work group participants

Augmenting Arizona's Healthcare Decontamination Capacity

Jamie Beauvais | Statewide Training and Exercise Manager

In the Fall of 2021, AzCHER began working with hospitals to deliver a Hospital Emergency Response Training (HERT) program in order to increase a hospital's ability to respond to a decontamination emergency. AzCHER is the first healthcare coalition in the country to organize a HERT program that is certified by FEMA's Center for Domestic Preparedness and Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs. Additionally, the program is sponsored by four major hospitals and the Indian Health Service, including Valleywise Health, Banner Health, Mayo Clinic, and Chinle Indian Health Service. Certified HERT instructors trained hospital staff members from across the state of Arizona.



2021-22 HERT Program Stats

- Number of employees trained in basic HERT:
 - 48 employees from Valleywise Health Medical Center
 - 2 employees from Tempe St. Luke's Hospital
 - 18 employees from Abrazo West Campus



July 18-23: Hospital Emergency Response Training (HERT) Train the Trainer

- In July 2021, the AzCHER Training & Exercise Manager sponsored 23 Coalition members to receive advanced training in the Train the Trainer, Hospital Emergency Response Training for Mass Casualty Incidents.
- The course was held at the Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, AL.
- Students representing all four regions and three AzCHER staff members attended.



Hear from Our Members and Partners

Through AzCHER, hundreds of healthcare organizations and emergency preparedness and response partners are building the relationships and capabilities that equip us to provide Arizonans optimal healthcare services during emergencies.

"As a rural Critical Access Hospital, we need to leverage every opportunity, partnership and resources to maintain an effective emergency preparedness program.

Training has been a major challenge on what the pandemic has done to staff turnover rates. We have been leveraging participation in FEMA- Center for Domestic Preparedness training and other training provided by AzCHER, to supplement our in-house training programs.

Developing community partnerships is a survival requirement in the rural environment, with limited first responder resources. Operational coordination with our county ESF-8 agency and AzCHER has been critical part of our emergency responses, and a "force multiplier" in our capabilities and capacities to function under emergency conditions."

--Bill Hopkins, Northern Cochise Community Hospital

"As a new PHEP Coordinator, AzCHER was instrumental in helping me get started. They provided me with the resources and guidance I needed to be effective in my position. Additionally, Shawna and Robin from AzCHER helped me to coordinate resources during emergencies. Their help has been critical during my time as a PHEP Coordinator."

--Seth Paget, Yavapai County Community Health Services

"DEMA has been working with AzCHER for several years since my assignment to this agency. We regularly share information regarding local, state and federal health issues as well as other disasters and responses that could or are already impacting health care facilities across the state. Additionally, we co-share information with our county and tribal partners as necessary to ensure a better preparedness state across the emergency management enterprise."

--Lawrence (Butch) Wise, Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs

"Thank you so much for connecting us with the suppliers who were able to assist us with meeting our PPE needs. With your help, we have been able to prepare and re-stock. Thank you for your assistance and the resource page was so helpful! Stay safe, stay well!"

--Nam Le-Morawa, San Carlos Apache Healthcare Corporation

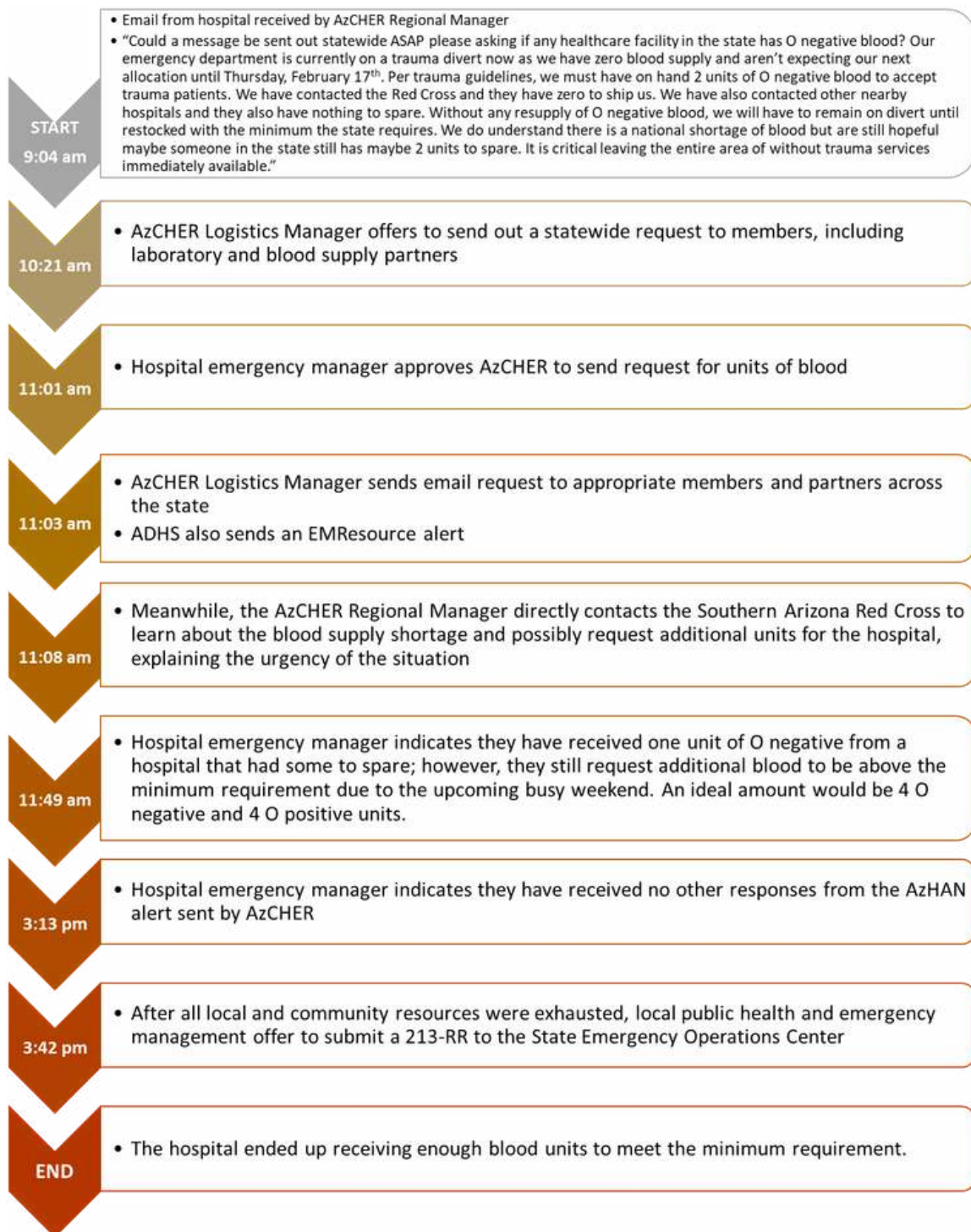
AzCHER's COVID-19 Response in 2021-22

As the COVID-19 public health emergency entered its second year, AzCHER took many actions to help ensure hospitals and healthcare facilities throughout Arizona received the necessary medical supplies and equipment to respond effectively. AzCHER received numerous requests for resources, such as PPE, medical supplies, and equipment, and even provided assistance for unique patient transfers.

Type of resource needed	How did AzCHER respond?
Ventilators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In December 2021, AzCHER received requests for ventilators from two hospitals. • A large hospital in the Phoenix area requested 20 ventilators and a tribal hospital requested 4 ventilators. • AzCHER worked with numerous agencies, including local and tribal public health departments and ADHS to identify the American Hospital Association as a potential ventilator source for the Phoenix hospital and FEMA as a source for the tribal hospital.
Syringes and saline flushes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In November 2021, AzCHER received its first resource request for syringes and saline flushes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ AzCHER sent a resource sharing request to its members and the hospital in need was able to obtain this product from another hospital within their region. ◦ In March 2022, AzCHER received additional requests for syringes and saline flushes from hospitals in the Central and Northern regions offering to provide this product. ◦ AzCHER continues to monitor supply chain updates for these types of resources.
Testing supplies and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In January 2022, AzCHER started receiving resource requests for the viral transport media needed to safely transfer viral samples to the laboratory. • In one case, the local public health department was able to supply COVID-19 test kits which included the viral transport media. • The other hospital obtained the viral transport media through their local public health department ordering from ADHS. • The FDA identified a shortage of testing supplies in 2020 and reverified the shortage in April 2022.
Dextrose injections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Jan-Mar of 2022, AzCHER received requests for Dextrose Injections. • These requests were received from hospitals in Northern and Southern regions of the state with discussions from all regions of shortages to come. • During those months, the FDA was starting to report the shortages of Dextrose Injections (5%, 10%, 25%, and 50%). • Today, the FDA still lists a current shortage of this resource.

A Real-World Timeline of a Typical Resource Sharing Event

Below is a real-world example of a typical resource sharing request from an AzCHER hospital member. The sequence of events shows collaboration between hospitals, local public health and emergency management, AzCHER, ADHS, and Red Cross.



AzCHER Mobile Application

On December 15, 2021, AzCHER launched the first mobile application for members that allows for collaboration during day-to-day operations as well as through large-scale emergencies or disasters. This is a free application to all AzCHER members that can be downloaded on cell phones in the Android and Apple stores.



Real-world Use of the App's Emergency Notification System

On April 19, 2022, during the height of the Tunnel Fire Northeast of Flagstaff, Arizona an alert was sent out through the AzCHER app. This message was sent to individuals that downloaded the app and were currently around the Northern region. The message informed members of the following information:

- Current status of the fire and projected direction
- Evacuations:
 - The following Communities are under a "GO" order, meaning you are advised to leave the area immediately.
 - The following communities are under a "SET" order, meaning there is a major fire danger in the area.
- Shelter status- the American Red Cross is opening an evacuation site
- Road Closures



A similar alert was also sent out to members during the Pipeline and Haywire Fires in Coconino National Forest and Flagstaff, Arizona area.



Jumanji in July: Arizona’s Largest Full-Scale Exercise

In the spring of 2022, the Arizona Coalition for Healthcare Emergency Response (AzCHER) facilitated its first statewide full-scale exercise for the healthcare community and its stakeholders. With 245 member organizations/partners and over 3,000 players from across the state, this is the largest healthcare exercise conducted in Arizona’s recent history, aside from the real-world pandemic. Playing organizations included members from public health, emergency management, emergency medical services, pharmacies, hospitals, and a myriad of healthcare facilities from home health to dialysis centers. To include such a large number of participants, AzCHER utilized a variety of virtual communication platforms combined with operational response activities at the coalition- and facility-based levels. Some of AzCHER’s main response objectives included resource sharing, facilitating the exchange of essential elements of information, and maintaining situational awareness across all coalition members. However, testing these as a statewide healthcare coalition was no easy task.

Jumanji is a Zulu word for “many effects,” especially referring to the exciting cascade of emergencies unleashed one after another, which aptly describes the scenario set forth in “Jumanji in July.” From wildfires to power outages, to mass casualty incidents and cybersecurity attacks, this scenario simulated an overwhelmed healthcare delivery system that successfully tested emergency operation plans and incident command activation. Additionally, each scenario hazard aligned with the Coalition’s Community Hazard Vulnerability Analysis conducted in October 2021.



Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the contributions of the people who worked tirelessly on the projects mentioned within this report, especially our members who continue to support AzCHER's vision. Below is a list of those who have provided funding support, leadership, and expert advice.

- Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association
- Arizona Department of Health Services
- Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs
- Arizona Health Care Association
- Coyote Crisis Collaborative
- Arizona Senior Independent Living Council
- Arizona Department of Education
- AzCHER Regional Steering Committees
- County and Tribal Public Health
- County and Tribal Emergency Management

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to prepare Arizona's healthcare community!



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