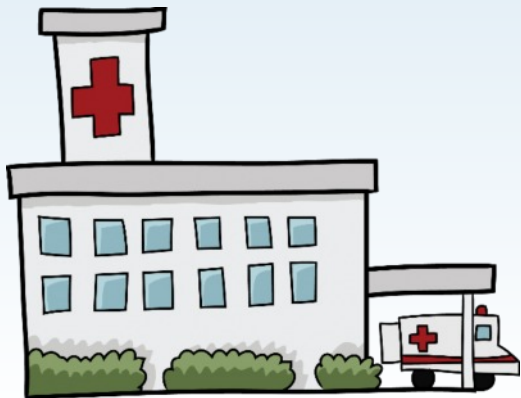




Georgia ARES Hospital Network

When power, Internet, and cellphone communications are lost ...

We have solutions!



Georgia ARES Hospital Team



- Who are We and How Do You Engage Us?
- Emergency Communications Requirement
- Georgia ARES Hospital Team Requirements
- Your Facility is Part of a Bigger Picture
- At the Facility – Radio Station, Staffing, Training & Reporting
- Key Elements to Success

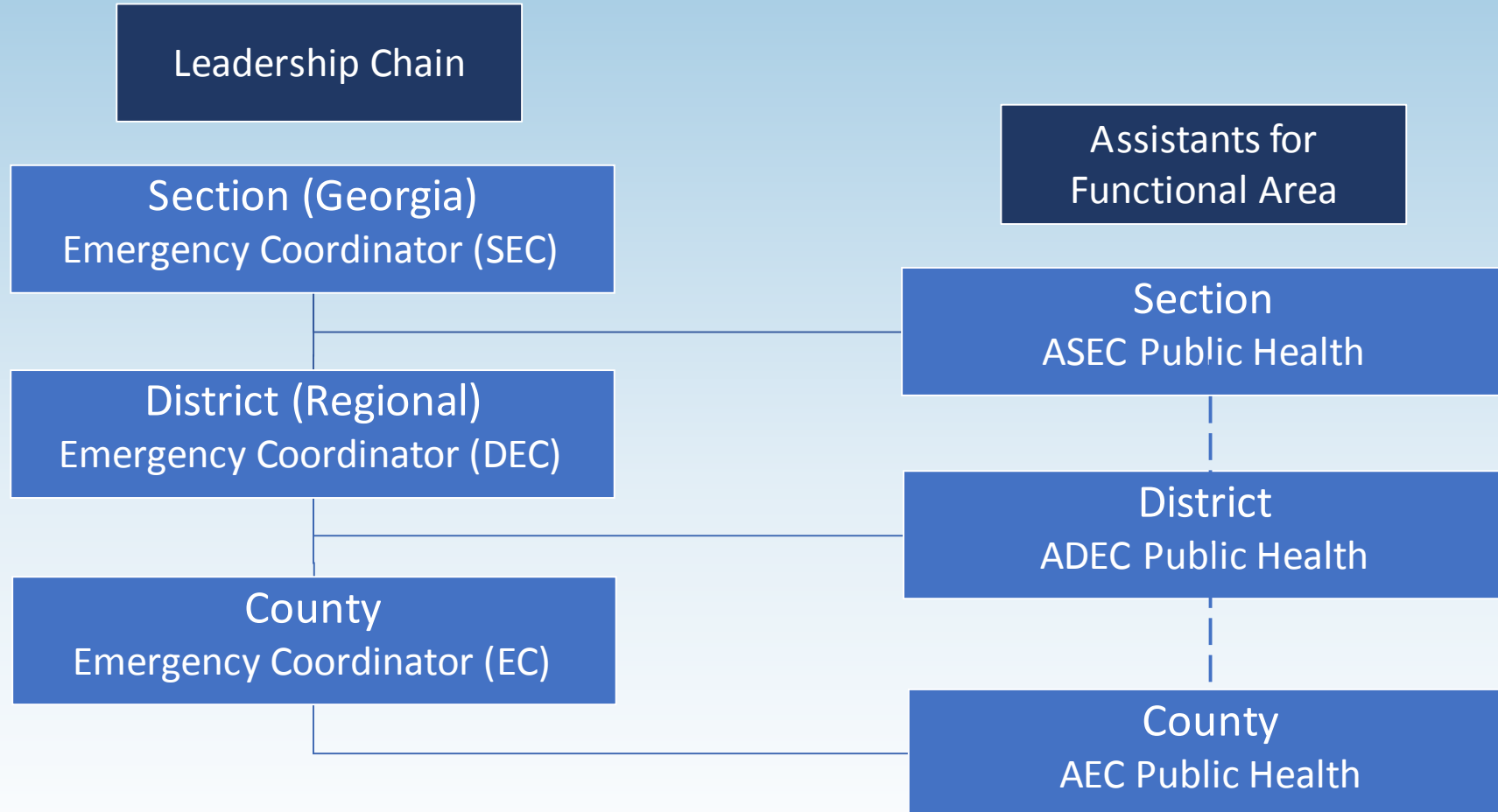


Georgia ARES Hospital Team



- The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES[®]) is a program of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL)
- In the event of a disaster we use radios, computers, and special software leveraging various frequencies, data modes, and techniques to provide vital communications when conventional communications are disrupted
- Our services are provided by volunteer, licensed amateur radio operators with specialized training using frequencies allocated to us by the FCC
- The Hospital Team is a public health functional interest area of ARES

Georgia ARES Hospital Team Structure





Engaging the Georgia ARES Hospital Team

- To initiate establishment of an ARES Hospital Team function at your health facility contact the Georgia State ARES Section leadership:
<https://gaares.org/contact.php>
- In your contact request please identify your interest in establishing a ARES Hospital Team presence at your facility, provide your health facility name and county of location
- The state Section leadership team will connect you with the local county Emergency Coordinator (EC) or other appropriate resource



CMS Emergency Communications Requirement

- Title 42 CFR 482.15 (c) (3) Establish primary and alternate communication
 - Effective 11/15/16 with implementation by 11/15/17
 - Primary and alternate means for communicating with the following:
 - (i) [Facility] staff
 - (ii) Federal, State, tribal, regional, and local emergency management agencies
- CMS State Operations Manual Appendix Z (Interpretive guidelines)
 - Require facilities to have installed and immediately available a method of communication that is independent of the Internet, cellphone towers, and the power distribution network
 - Lists Amateur Radio Operators' (HAM Radio) systems as a solution

FEMA Course AWR-336 Health Sector Emergency Preparedness



Facilities are to have an alternate means to communicate with their staff and Federal, state and local emergency management agencies during an emergency ...

The following are examples of alternative devices:

- Pagers
- Internet provided by satellite or non-telephone cable systems
- Cellular telephones (where appropriate). Facilities can also carry accounts with multiple cell phone carriers to mitigate communication failures during an emergency
- Radio transceivers (walkie-talkies)
- Various other radio devices such as the NOAA Weather Radio and Amateur Radio Operators' (HAM) systems
- Satellite telephone communication system

Why Use Amateur Radio Emergency Service?



- Amateur radio communications is specifically noted by FEMA and CMS as satisfying emergency communication requirements
- The Georgia Hospital Association (GHA) named the Georgia ARES Section as a solution provider
- Within GA ARES the Hospital Team is designed to meet the CMS requirement providing effective communication connectivity to local and state emergency management
- Satellite solutions are expensive, difficult to maintain, require a clear view of the sky (e.g. do not work indoors), and do not work during severe weather

GA ARES Hospital Team Requirements

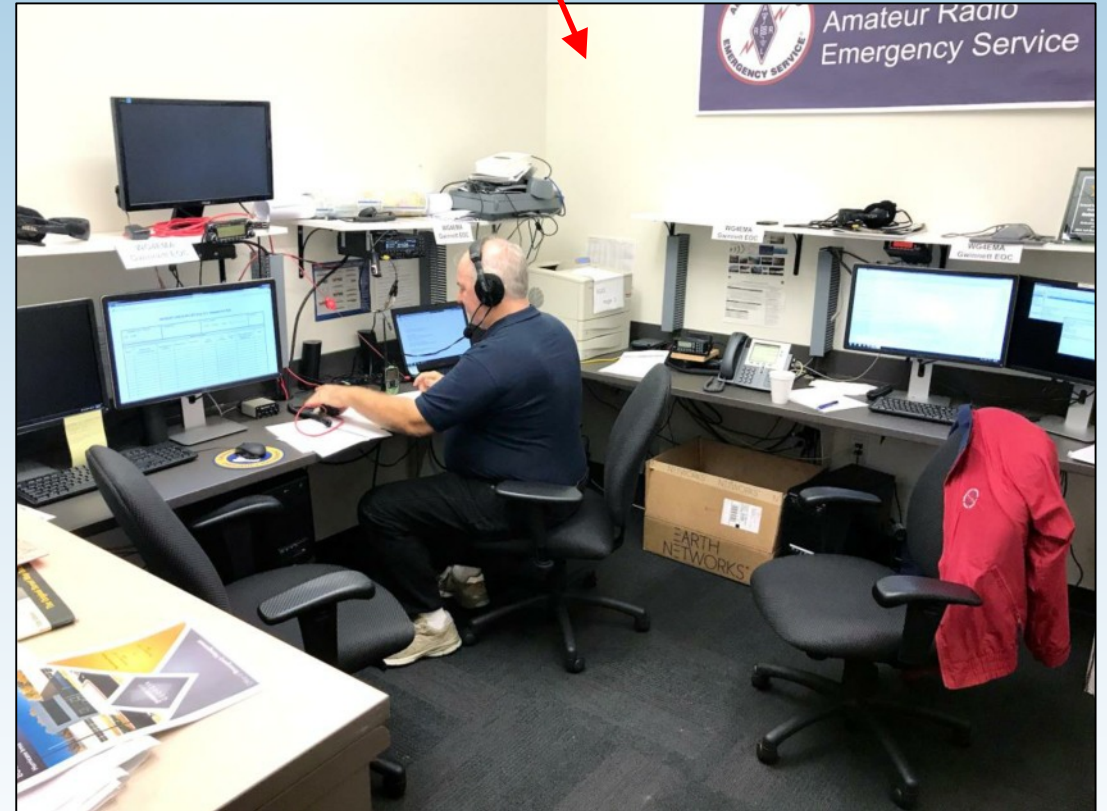


- Operators receive background checks and credentialed with GA State ARES
- Operators receive HIPAA initial and biennial refresher training
- Operators are trained in amateur radio communication voice and digital techniques necessary for connectivity with county EMA, State GEMA, Regional Coordinating Hospitals, and Region-wide hospital networks
- Operators are registered with and trained in the use of GHA911 WebEOC
- Operators are registered with the Everbridge notification system
- Operators are trained to present themselves in a professional manner within the facility environment

Requirements (cont'd)

- Operators are under ICS protocol, taking their orders from the facility Incident Commander
- Operators are trained to work with county and state EMAs
- Many county EMAs have signed MOUs with ARES and provide radio rooms at their EOCs
- During statewide emergencies we have ARES operators at GEMA (Atlanta and/or backup site)

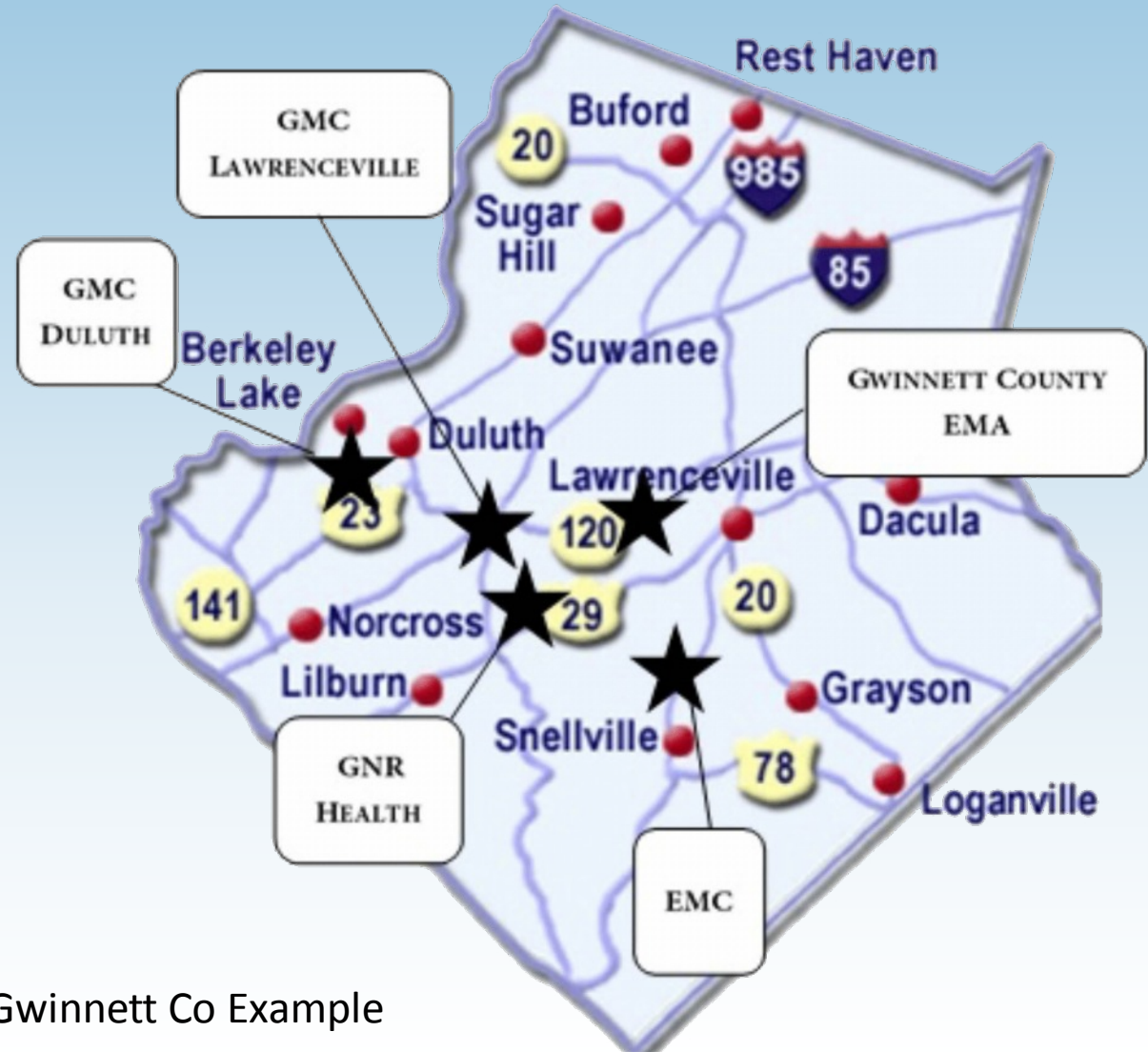
Gwinnett Co EOC
ARES Radio Station



Your Facility is Part of a Bigger Picture



- County Emergency Operations Center (EMA)
- Eastside Medical Center (EMC)
- Gwinnett Medical Center Lawrenceville
- Gwinnett Medical Center Duluth
- Gwinnett-Newton-Rockdale Health Department



Gwinnett Co Example

REGIONAL COORDINATING HOSPITALS

The map displays the state of Georgia divided into regions, each associated with a specific hospital. The regions are color-coded and labeled with letters A through Ped. The hospitals are: Hamilton Medical Center (A), Northeast Georgia Medical Center (B), Floyd Medical Center (C), Grady Health System (D), Athens Regional Medical Center (E), Wellstar Kennestone Hospital (N), and Augusta University Medical Center (G). The map also shows the locations of community hospitals (red dots) and regional coordinating hospitals (blue icons). A legend on the right side of the map provides the key for the letters and symbols.

Region	Hospital
A	Hamilton Medical Center
B	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
C	Floyd Medical Center
D	Grady Health System
E	Athens Regional Medical Center
F	Navicent Health Medical Center
G	Augusta University Medical Center
H	Fairview Park Hospital
I	Midtown Medical Center
J	Memorial Health Univ. Medical Center
K	Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital
L	Tift Regional Medical Center
M	Mayo Clinic Health Systems in Waycross
N	Wellstar Kennestone Hospital
Ped	Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

• COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
[H] REGIONAL COORDINATING HOSPITAL

At the facility – Radio Station



VHF / UHF
D-Star
Radio

HF
Radio



Digital
Data
Interface

Gwinnett Medical Center @
Duluth Radio Station

With facilities properly outfitted, ARES operators can communicate with the EOC and key partners in the region

Basic operating station requirements:

- VHF/UHF, D-Star & HF radios
- Strategically placed antennas
- Emergency power (e.g. RED plug)
- Physical security for equipment
- Internal communication to facility emergency management
- ARES team credentialed with facility
- ARES team integration into facility ICS program



At the Facility - Staffing & Training

- Our goal is to staff each served facility with qualified, credentialed volunteers that will allow for extended 24 hour coverage broken into 12 hour shifts
- We conduct and document monthly statewide ARES Hospital Network drills practicing all our communications techniques
- We are active in county and statewide ARES learning and drill activities
- Include the ARES team in facility emergency drills so we will be familiar with facility emergency management operations and associated EM staff



At the Facility - Monthly Exercise

- Monthly exercise provide
 - Hands-on training for operators
 - Verification of equipment operational state
 - Identification of areas for improvement
- A standard training format
 - Employs radio technologies to be used during an actual emergency
 - Drill, drill, drill ...
- Exercise is documented
 - Formal record of facility participation (useful for Joint Commission & CMS audit / survey)
 - Tracks individual operator participation





Standard Monthly Training Format

1. GHA WebEOC check-in; monitored for duration of drill
2. Check-in to Regional RCH (or alternate RCH) using direct voice radio communication
3. ICS-213 message sent via digital radio communication
 - List facility (using call sign in addition to name) and status
 - Control operator listed along with additional on-site operators
4. Digital voice statewide check-in on D-Star and VHF/UHF radio network
5. HF voice statewide check-in
6. Station communication is logged on ICS-309 form and maintained with station records

Standard ICS Forms

1st GMC-D
Activation
ICS-213

Communications
Log ICS-309



General Message (ICS 213)		
1. Incident Name: GA ARES Hospital Net		Msg #: KK4FGL-1
2. To (Name/Position): Brett Smith W4HBS		
3. From (Name/Position): Mark T Bell / GMC Duluth KK4FGL		
4. Subject: GA ARES Hospital Net Monthly Drill	5. Date: 2018-8-5	6. Time: 14:04
7. Message:		
Hospital: Gwinnett Medical Center at Duluth Operators: 1. Mark Bell N7GRB 2. Charlie Allport WS4TOT Operating on-site! This is the first activation of the GMC Duluth site! Using Hospital Equipment		
8. Approved by: Mark / N7GRB		Position / Title: Operator

COMMUNICATIONS LOG (RACES/ARES)			Incident/Event Name: <i>GA Hospital Net</i>	DATE PREPARED TIME PREPARED
FOR OPERATIONAL PERIOD # <i>1</i>			Frequency:	
RADIO OPERATOR NAME: <i>N7GRB / Mark</i>			STATION I.D. <i>KK4</i>	
LOG				
TIME	STATION I.D.		SUBJECT	
	FROM	TO		
<i>1400</i>	<i>KK4FGL</i>	<i>KK4FGK</i>	<i>check-in</i>	
<i>1435</i>	<i>KK4FGL</i>	<i>W4HBS</i>	<i>ICS 213</i>	
<i>1440</i>	<i>KK4FGL</i>	<i>K4SDJ</i>	<i>D-STAR R30B check-in</i>	
<i>1452</i>	<i>W3WWI</i>	<i>W4HBS</i>	<i>213 update sent to W4</i>	
<i>1459</i>	<i>WS4TOT</i>	<i>W4HBS</i>	<i>ICS 213 Checkin</i>	
<i>1504</i>	<i>RX4HA</i>	<i>W4HBS</i>	<i>ICS 213 Checkin</i>	
<i>1600</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>securing station</i>	

Typical ICS forms used at the radio station:

ICS-211 Check-in, ICS-213 Message, ICS-214 Activity, ICS-309 Comm Log



Monthly Hospital Net Exercise Reports

Facility
Status

GEORGIA HOSPITAL NET REPORT 2018

RCH's	Region	THIRD QUARTER							
		12/3/17	7/1/18	CMS Compliant	8/5/18	CMS Compliant		CMS Compliant	10/7/18
Hamilton Regional Med Ctr	A	O	O		O		-		
NE GA Health Systems	B	O	O		O		O		
Floyd Med Ctr	C	O	O		O		O		
Grady Health Systems	D	O	O		-		O		
Gwinnett Med Ctr - Duluth	D				O		O		
Gwinnett Med Ctr- Lawrenceville	D	O	O		O		O		

CALL	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	POSITION	HOSPITAL REPRESENTING	REGION	LOCATION (R/O)	D-ST / REL	VHF REL	HF	DIG
KK4FGL				GWINNETT MED CTR - DULUTH	D					1
N7GRB	MARK	BELL		GWINNETT MED CTR - DULUTH	D	O	1		?	1
WS4TOT	CHARLIE	ALLPORT		GWINNETT MED CTR - DULUTH	D	O	X			1

Operator
Participation



Key Elements to Success

1. Document radio external communications and training plans
 - Incorporate into facility emergency communications plan (CMS reqm't)
 - Essential activation information in the event of an actual emergency
 - Consider defining facility-ARES relationship in Memorandum of Understanding
2. GA ARES Hospital Team Volunteers
 - Recruiting, staffing and training as an on-going process
 - Credentialed with GA ARES and the served facility
 - Integration into the facility's volunteer staff and ICS program
3. Radio station equipment and maintenance
 - Facility administration supports the emergency communication function
 - Facility Engineering provides installation of coax runs, emergency power, etc.
 - Volunteers provide skills for radio installation and operation



Elements to Success – Communication Plan

- Collaborative method for activating ARES resources
- ARES resource role within facility ICS team
 - Consider use of HICS Emergency Radio Operator Job Sheet Aid
- Essential information enabling message flow between:
 - Facility, county and regional partners (local government EMA, RCH)
 - Last-mile communication between radio station and the facility ICS center
- Elements of last-mile communication to include
 - Location of facility EOC & radio room with points of contact
 - Methods of contact (e.g., phone, email, chat / WebEOC, hand courier)
 - Utilization of standard ICS forms and message handling practice



Elements to Success for ARES Members

- Patience
 - Hospitals do not run at Internet time
 - Set a long term goal
- Perseverance
 - Work with what you have
 - Be creative to obtain that which you need for your long term goal
 - e.g., grants, repurposed hospital equipment
- Humility
 - Respect the leadership of the hospital administration and ICS Team
 - Stay focused on the mission



Questions?

Thank You



... for allowing Georgia ARES Hospital Team to assist your health facility in meeting your emergency communications needs within the CMS mandate!

We are happy to serve!



References

- Emergency Preparedness Requirements for Medicare and Medicaid Participating Providers and Suppliers [includes 42 CFR 482.15(c)(3)]
<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2016-21404>
- [CMS] State Operations Manual Appendix Z- Emergency Preparedness for All Provider and Certified Supplier Types Interpretive Guidance
https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap_z_emergprep.pdf
- Georgia ARES Hospital Team <https://gaares.org/heop.php>
 - Georgia ARES Hospital Emergency Operations Plan
- HICS Emergency Radio Operator Job Sheet Aid
<http://hicscenter.org/SitePages/JASs-JobAids.aspx>