

Business Continuity for Healthcare Organizations

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Situation

Recent events have pointed to remaining gaps in healthcare preparedness – mainly the capacity of our clinics, hospitals and long-term care to continue to deliver essential services when impacted by a service interruption or disaster.

Healthcare Business Continuity Planning improves the capacity of our provider organizations to maintain essential services in the event normal operations are adversely affected. We are working to identify requirements and deliver training and tools that align with the specified needs of healthcare organizations.

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Background

In January 2012 the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) released eight (8) capabilities they identified as the basis for healthcare preparedness.

Several healthcare organizations have assessed planning efforts to date against these capabilities and identified the development of a business continuity program; also called continuity of operations plans (COOP), as a key initiative throughout the current 5-year grant cycle.

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Assessment

The cross-section of requirements by ASPR, CMS, HIPAA, and Meaningful Use increasingly stress the need for business continuity planning. To address this, healthcare leaders aim to integrate planning efforts with operations in order to maintain the capacity to operate during emergency events.

An unprecedented number of healthcare facilities have closed temporarily or permanently following events due in part to facilities lacking continuity strategies. Aligning these strategies with executive priorities and organizational strategy is essential.

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Recommendation

It is recommended that organizations develop an integrated, multi-disciplinary program focused on supporting and strengthening healthcare capabilities and resiliency through the development of a business continuity program.