Hospital Incident Command System (HICS) Activation

FIRST 30 MINUTES

What you need to focus on when activating HICS (to be used with the Incident Commander Job Action Sheet)

***Making a decision to activate HICS***

* There is a tendency to go into “solve the problem” mode which may be OK for smaller, short-term situations. However, this can cause problems, especially those that become more complex/expand quickly.
  + Questions to ask whether to activate
    - Can the event be handled with the staff I have on hand?
      * Is the number of patients known?
      * How busy is the ED already?
      * Is there surgeries ongoing or scheduled
      * Is the an OB case with special concerns
      * If power failure, CT Scanner may be down for 45 minutes, EMS stroke patients may need to be diverted
    - What areas of the organization are being impacted? (have facility services and IT/IS complete an all systems checklist P:HICS Forms; 251)
      * What is the impact to the community?
    - Can the event be handled with the current supplies on hand?
    - How long will this event last (past shift change/day)?
* Once you have verified the nature of the incident as an emergency or significant event, it is best to activate the system (you can always cancel it).

***Once you have determined to activate HICS***

* Assume role of Incident Commander. You may be taking over the role from a Nurse Supervisor who has activated HICS before you arrive.
* Establish Command Center: Boardroom and Conference Center on generator power or Clinic Breakroom (not on generator power).
* Obtain the HICS “football” located in the cabinet in the Administrative Copier Room. The Command Board is also located there. The HICS structure is on the whiteboard and can be used for recording assigned roles.
* Obtain the Emergency Operations Plan (located in the cabinet)
* Read the Incident Commander Job Action Sheet.
* Establish a scribe to document the event.
* Establish a meeting time for General and Command Staff in the Conference Center

**Initial Action Plan decisions to revolve around**

* **Life Safety**
* **Incident Stabilization**
* **Property/Environmental Preservation**
* Announce by overhead page: “Hospital Incident Command activation. Incident Command Located \_\_\_\_\_\_” repeat x3.
* Can the event be handled with the staff I have on hand?
  + If no, Activate mass notification system and recall staff. List #2001 Tier1: calls approx. 130 persons (Admin, Leadership, IT, ED nurses, ED, FHMC and Allina Physicians, Lab, Imaging, EMS, Social Services, Security, and Med/Surg nurses). List 2000 is a full recall of all NH&C staff.

If the event is large and you need a bigger command center use of the conference center is recommended.

* Assign someone to bring in the marked, Rubbermaid totes containing the HICS materials (vests, job action sheets, clipboards, etc.). These totes are located in the ambulance garage by the ED.
  + Tub #1 is to be used by the ED as a paper charting process.
  + Tub # 2 has the Incident Command, Operations, Planning, Finance, and Logistics HICS Job Action Sheets and vests, bring this to the command center.
* Assign Roles to needed positions based on Action Plan
  + Use the vest assigned to the job action sheet for that role. Have them read their job action sheet.
  + Have the Scribe record who is covering what role (usually staff will have more than one role-check to make sure they can do them all), update record when someone changes roles.
* Radios: 5 radios are located; In the Facilities Shop and instructions are: set to channel 1

2 radios are located; in the Security office

* Cell phones are located: In the IT suite, under the printer there is a cabinet, there is a label indicating “Emergency Phones”. There are analog phones that plug into emergency jacks.

(If this is a 30 minute HICS Drill, you may stop at this point. Complete the HICS Event sheet for the drill to identify problems or opportunities for improvement)

* If you need the Decontamination Tent (>8-10 patients), contact Facilities staff who will bring the trailer which holds the tent. Once on site, it takes about 30 minutes to set up with 4 people.
* The Plan: With people in place to give you good information, you will be able to create an effective Action Plan. If you thought it was a small event and assigned yourself all the roles, but now it escalades = EXPAND; if you assigned roles that are not going to be needed = CONTRACT staff and downsize. This is part of “The Plan”, but only works if you have good information.