

Hurricane Charley Relief UPDATE

August 16, 2004 The Florida Hospital Association has been involved in the Hurricane Charley storm response since Wednesday of last week. Throughout the weekend, FHA has been stationed at the state emergency operations center in Tallahassee. Working with the state Agency for Health Care Administration and the Department of Health, more than 550 patients were transferred via nine helicopters and more than 200 ambulances. All patients were successfully transferred, including dozens of critically-ill and ventilator-dependent patients. Currently, the following hospitals are closed: Charlotte Regional and Gulf Coast Hospital. The following hospitals are operating emergency department services only: Highlands Regional, Fawcett Memorial Hospital, St. Josephs and Lake Wales Hospital. Other hospitals are operating on generators and have no local electric service. FHA thanks the hospital community and the hundreds of emergency response personnel who assisted the communities most affected by the hurricane. Many organizations and individuals have asked how they can provide additional assistance to displaced hospital employees and others who provide services to the hospital community. **What Can You Do?** FHA is in the process of establishing the Hurricane Charley Relief Fund. Once the fund has been established, additional information will be made available to the hospital community. In the meantime, if your hospital would like to offer assistance to the affected hospitals, please contact FHA in Tallahassee at: 850-222-9800. Katie Woodward will be coordinating the offers of assistance. She can also be reached via email at: katie@fha.org Rich Rasmussen has been staffing the hurricane response and can be reached at any time via cell phone after hours at: 850-212-7487. FHA has identified staffing as the most immediate need for the hospitals. If your organization would like to offer nurses and other support staff for short-term relief, please contact the FHA and we will assist in placing the staff in hospitals with an identified need. It is important that we know the skill mix of your staff. This information will also be forwarded to the emergency operations directors across the state. **Medicare/Medicaid Reimbursement Issues** FHA has also been in contact with CMS and the state Medicaid office to identify staff available to assist hospitals in accelerating Medicare and Medicaid payments. This service is available to any hospital affected by the storm. The contact info is listed below. [Medicare](#)

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