

Proposal: The Inclusion of a Mental Health Subcommittee for the SE PA RCTTF

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SUMMARY

Proposal: The following document represents a proposal for the formation of a Mental Health Subcommittee of the Southeast Pennsylvania Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force. The justification on the following pages will outline an evidence-based platform pointing towards the necessary inclusion of Mental Health as a full partner in all emergency/disaster planning and response. This is true particularly in the event of a terrorist event, which is primarily psychological in nature.

Goals: All of these goals are manageable and will contribute to greater levels of relationship-building, community activity, regional interaction and collaboration, and finally, a more prepared mental health disaster response. With the initiation of a mental health Listserv and recent regional Summit, the proposed subcommittee is already positioned for ongoing action and involvement.

Short Term:

- Regional Mental Health Listserv
- Periodic regional summits
- Disaster mental health specific training events for the SEPA region
- Collaboration among counties in the development of coherent, robust, and ultimately useful nominal mental health disaster plans.
- Collaboration and communication with the Emergency Response and Emergency Management communities.

Long Term:

- Tabletop scenario exercises for the five counties that involve mental health.
- Role play disaster drills for scenarios that include bioterrorism decontamination units and victim debriefing.
- Research and collaboration for best-practices mental health preparedness & response programs that can be adapted for a variety of emergency/disaster scenarios.
- Initiation of a disaster mental health volunteer database spanning the five county region.
- Certification and training for non-traditional mental health responders, such as faith-based community leaders.