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MODULE 1: COMMUNITY EMERGENCY HUB

PART 3
THE GUIDE FOR COMMUNITIES

NATIONAL CONSORTIUM FOR SOCIETAL RESILIENCE [UK+]

MANCHESTER 1824
The University of Manchester
Alliance Manchester Business School

RBOC Network

UKRI Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

About this guide

This guide provides information to help you set up and run your Community Emergency Hub. Take the time you need to set up the Community Emergency Hub properly. You don't have to open until you are ready. **Your safety is the priority. If you cannot do something safely, do not do it. Always phone 999 when situations are life-threatening**.

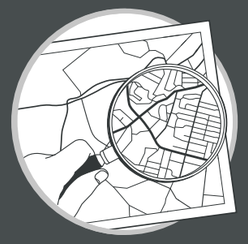


A safety briefing is included in the kit along with this full guide to help get you started.



Adapt the ideas in this guide to suit the emergency, and the facility.

People working at the Community Emergency Hub have no legal powers to take resources from anyone, or force anyone to do anything. All usual laws still apply in an emergency.



This guide has been customised for your local Community Emergency Hub and your community.

Where a community has gone through a Community Response Planning Process, there is more detail about how to solve local problems with the local resources available. In communities that have not yet been through this process, there are questions which may assist you in finding solutions.

Symbol reference guide

- Useful advice or information
- Considerations for people with disabilities
- Important information

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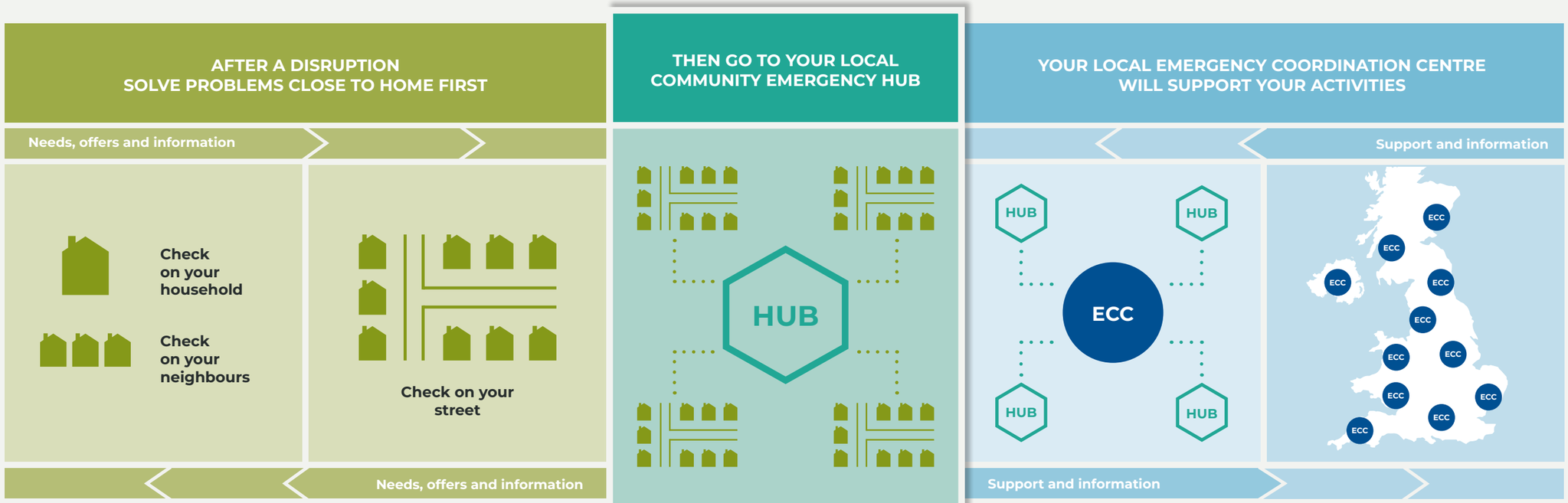
Considerations for your community for the future

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Introduction to Community Emergency Hubs

Disruptions have invasive and far-reaching impacts no-matter whether they arise from floods, storms, cyber-attack, or other events. Disruptions will disturb your normal living conditions, expose fragilities in your community, and can cause widespread impacts and suffering.

The local council and emergency services aren't the only ones who respond to a disruption. Communities have many of the skills and resources needed to solve problems and help each other. Community Emergency Hubs are a way for local people to work together to solve local problems, while still co-ordinating with the local council and emergency services about big problems.



After a disruption, solve problems close to home first. Do what you can to make you and your household safe. If you can help other households, or need help in yours, go out and check with your neighbours. Then go to your local Community Emergency Hub.

If people in your neighbourhood need help, or can help others, check the surrounding area as many problems can be solved at this level.

Your Community Emergency Hub is a place for community members to congregate and coordinate their response to help each other. Your Community Emergency Hub could also act as a safe shelter, cool/warm hub, or rally-point for the community during loss of utilities (e.g. electricity, gas, water, telecommunications). The Community Emergency Hub is not reliant on a physical building so, if the place where a Community Emergency Hub starts becomes unsuitable or is needed by other users, you can always move to a different venue/location.

If help is needed that the community cannot provide themselves, let the local council and emergency services know. They may be able get help from a community near you or from other sources. Likewise, if you have people or resources that could help outside your community, let the local council and emergency services know.

If more than one Emergency Coordination Centre is active, they might need to coordinate with each other. They can do this by connecting with each other to share resources.

Objectives of the Community Emergency Hub

The Community Emergency Hub is a place where the community can coordinate their efforts to help each other during or after a disruption including helping to:

- Provide information and advice to the community.
- Focus the community response on using what is available to give the most help.
- Match peoples' needs with offers of help.
- Provide a safe and supportive gathering place.
- Connect the community with emergency services.

Information about the wider response

The Emergency Coordination Centre is the control room or contact centre that manages the response and recovery.

Your local council will be able to put you in touch with the Emergency Coordination Centre. It is where many organisations come together to manage their joint response to the disruption and will include the emergency services (e.g. police, fire, ambulance), the local council, and other important partners (e.g. national bodies, voluntary sector, utility companies).

The local council and emergency services may be overwhelmed and delayed during major disruptions and may not be able to respond to every issue immediately. However, for life-threatening situations, still phone 999.

Other community support groups may also self-organise in your area, and the official response may come as well. Work with them to make sure everyone in need is reached, the workload is shared, and the overall response is coordinated.

Don't forget you can ask the Emergency Coordination Centre and other Community Emergency Hubs for help if you need it.

If your Community Emergency Hub can help other communities, then let the Emergency Coordination Centre know.

7

Set up a Community Emergency Hub

Identifying an appropriate facility for your Community Emergency Hub

When identifying a facility, consider:

- Facilities that are already used by local communities (e.g. school, community centre, shop) which satisfy all parts of the community (e.g. accessibility, culturally).
- The facility may need to increase its capacity to cope with demand so extra rooms may be helpful.
- Community Emergency Hubs do not rely on a building, so it can move to a better place if needed.
- Outside the facility, check the environment is safe. Consider: Are there hazards that present a health or safety risk (e.g. flooding, fires, and smell of gas)?

If the area is not safe, then relocate to a safe facility. If the facility is needed by other responders, then relocate to another facility. Leave a note to say where you are relocating to and why so that others keep away from harm.



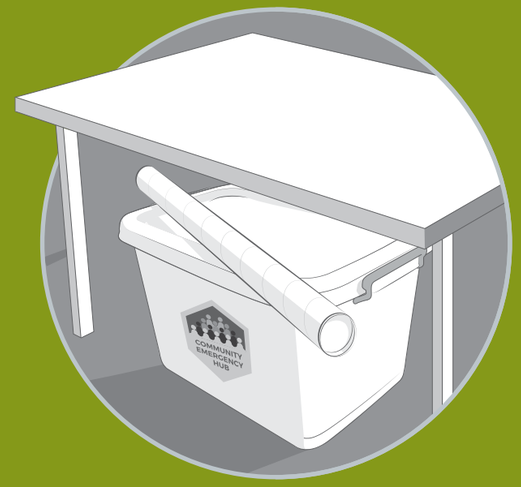
Tidy the facility's spaces and organise rooms

Tidy the facility's spaces. Organise rooms in the facility so they meet your needs, keep walkways clear, and ensure the space is accessible by everyone.

Ensure the space is accessible by everyone, keep walkways clear and consider those with mobility and visual difficulties.

If more people come to the Community Emergency Hub while you are setting up, encourage them to help, if they can.





Find the Community Emergency Hub Box

Resources will be in a plastic box labelled "Community Emergency Hub Box". To find this box, ask the Community Emergency Hub Coordinator or the Emergency Coordination Centre.

The Community Emergency Hub kit contains:

- This guide.
- The safety briefing.
- Lanyards for Community Emergency Hub roles which should be worn when on duty.
- Maps of the community.
- AM/FM/DAB radio.
- Stationery.

If the box is unavailable, find the box items from your community. Take the time you need to set up the Community Emergency Hub properly. You don't have to open until you are ready.

2

Safety briefing for all volunteers

Safety is the number 1 priority

The Community Emergency Hub Box contains a laminated Safety Briefing to be read by all volunteers or read to them. It reminds everyone that:

If you cannot do something safely, do not do it.

If a situation is life-threatening, phone 999.

Before doing anything:

Assess the risk of an activity:

- Decide what you can do safely.
- Check you have the kit and ability to work safely.
- Find others to work with to avoid working alone.

As you work:

Stay alert to life-threatening situations:

- Do not put yourself in danger so only help if you can stay safe.
- Tell others to stay away from the danger.
- Report new dangers and accidents, immediately, to a supervisor.
- Report near misses to a supervisor

Safeguard vulnerable persons:

Safeguarding is to ensure the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and their protection from harm.

- Ensure at least two people are with the vulnerable person, where possible, to protect their safety.
- Ensure you understand their individual needs and act appropriately.

Always:

Take care of yourself and others:

- Attend to your own needs first.
- Ask others how they are feeling.
- Consider taking a break, changing roles, or going home.

3

Initial activities a Community Emergency Hub can deliver

Check the Community Emergency Response Plan

Your community may have prepared a Community Emergency Response Plan. You can check that Community Emergency Response Plan for initial information on local assets to address local problems. This may help you to identify places/spaces, local groups, youth groups, clubs and networks, services, and infrastructure in the community where you can target your efforts.

Identify priority groups

It is important to quickly identify priority groups, persons with disabilities, minority or under-represented residents as they may have specific and additional needs during a disruption.



Initial activities

Other initial activities to deliver include:

Go into the community to check on who and what has been affected and their needs – both immediately after the disruption and regularly in the days that follow:

- Use local lists and knowledge to identify affected groups.
- Update maps to record your checks of locations.
- Record impacts on the community (e.g. status of roads, unresolved needs).

Check everyone has shelter that is safe and comfortable.

- The local council will provide short-term rest centres and longer-term housing so inform them if anyone needs shelter, especially children and vulnerable adults.
- Children and vulnerable adults should not be left on their own.
- Make simple repairs to homes to make them safe enough to stay in.
- Encourage people who cannot stay in their own homes to go to friends/family and take bedding with them.
- Tell the Emergency Coordination Centre how many people need shelter.

Report medical emergencies immediately on 999:

- Coordinate people with medical skills.
- Check on people with day-to-day medical needs.
- Direct injured/sick people to medical providers that are known to be open.

Report life-threatening situations immediately on 999:

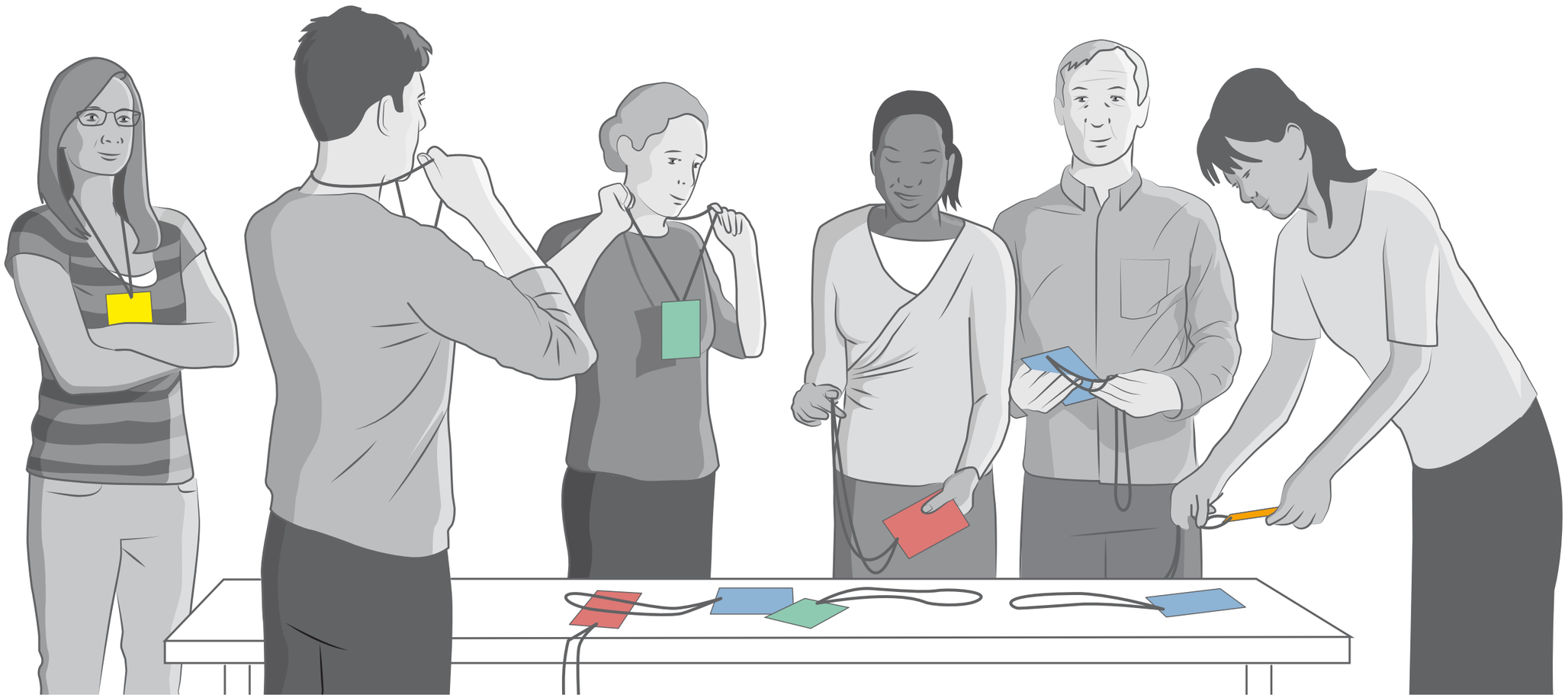
- Help if you can, but do not put yourself in danger to help someone else.
- Tell people to stay away from the hazard. Sometimes all you can do is stop other people from being harmed.
- Tell the Hub Coordinator and Emergency Coordination Centre.

4

Work as a team

Bring everyone together

Before setting up with tables and noticeboards, gather all volunteers together to chat through the safety briefing and discuss activities.



Explain to the volunteers that:

- Their Community Emergency Hub is a local space where local people come to identify the local needs created by the disruption and decide how to work together to safely solve local problems using what is available.
- Volunteers should not put themselves at risk and should take personal responsibility for their own safety. Explain the Safety Briefing with volunteers.
- Everyone is responsible to keep children, vulnerable adults and each other safe, and must raise safety and safeguarding concerns immediately.
- The Community Emergency Hub objectives are to:
  - Provide information and advice to the community.
  - Focus the community response to where it can have most impact using what is available.
  - Match peoples' needs with offers of help.
  - Provide a safe and supportive gathering place.
  - Connect the community with the local council and emergency services.
- They can swap roles if they want a break.

Assign roles

Together, agree who will take the following roles:

- **Hub Coordinator**
- **Information**
- **Communications**
- **Needs and Offers**
- **Reception**

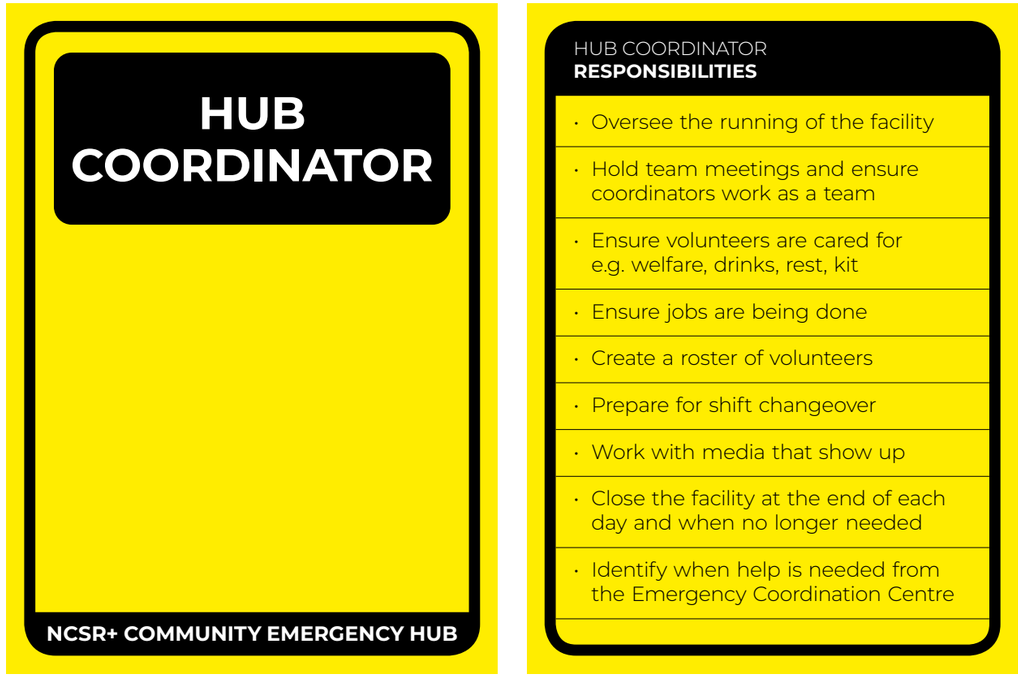
While the community will greatly value the contribution of all volunteers, please remember that volunteers have no legal powers in their work. So, they cannot take resources from anyone, or force anyone to do anything because all usual laws still apply in a disruption.

Role lanyards

Some volunteers may take more than one role. Major decisions should be made together by role holders. Lanyards should be worn by the role holder.

Role information is continued over the page.

Make sure everyone knows who the Hub Coordinator is and that everyone wears a role lanyard so they are easily identifiable.



Hub Coordinator

This role coordinates activities to meet the Community Emergency Hub objectives.

The role will:

Manage the Community Emergency Hub team so:

- Everyone knows who the Hub Coordinator is.
- Other roles do their job and have what they need to do it.
- Hold meetings to help everyone work as a team.

Volunteer welfare so:

- Everyone looks after themselves (e.g. having food, not over-working).
- If work is stressful, volunteers take a break or change roles.
- Ensure all volunteers read the Safety Briefing provided in the Community Emergency Hub Box.

Deliver to meet community needs to ensure:

- Immediate needs are met using community assets and offers.
- All tasks are done.

Prepare for shift changeover:

- Summarise changing needs and Community Emergency Hub activities.
- Update volunteer rosters.



Close the Community Emergency Hub:

- Thank volunteers.
- Lock away equipment.
- Put up a sign about Community Emergency Hub closure, if/when it will reopen, and where to go for urgent assistance.
- Tell the Emergency Coordination Centre of closure.
- Return the facility to its pre-condition.
- Place any records from activities into the Community Emergency Hub Box for the Emergency Coordination Centre to collect.

Identify when the Community Emergency Hub needs extra help:

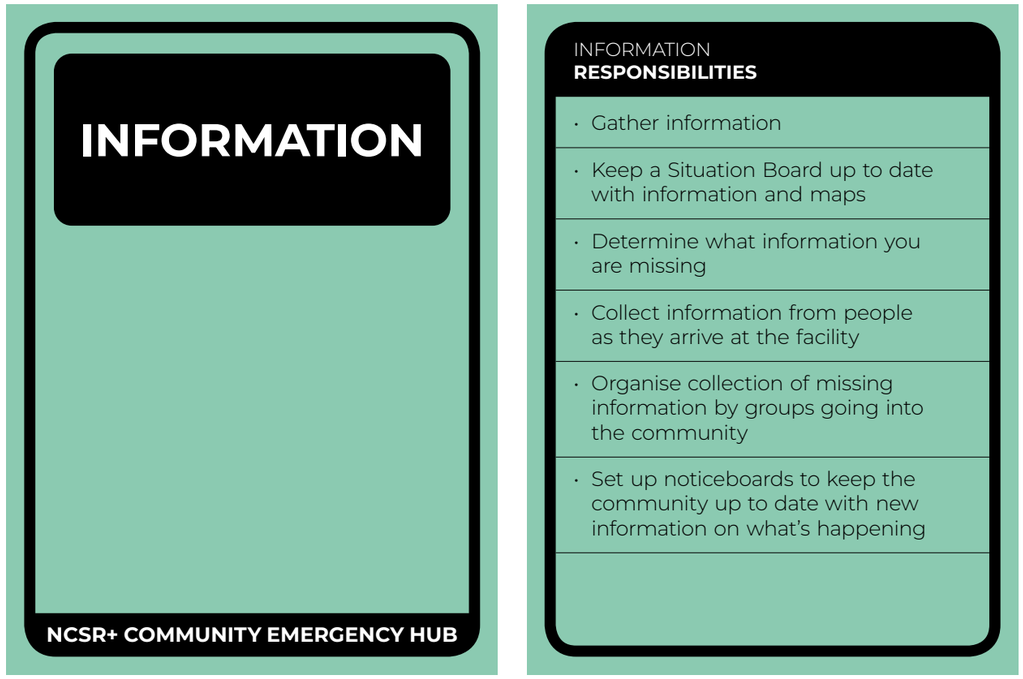
- From more volunteers.
- From the Emergency Coordination Centre.

Work with media that arrive at the Community Emergency Hub:

- Give them updates (e.g. the Community Emergency Hub is open, needs volunteers).
- Do NOT provide:
  - Personal or confidential information (e.g. names, addresses).
  - Details of deaths or injuries.

The group of people in our community with impairments is wide and diverse. Some of these impairments are visible and some are not. These include hearing, vision, physical, mobility or cognitive impairments. Ensure that the Community Emergency Hub caters for these different needs so that nobody is left behind. Make sure that all public information messages, signage and directions are clear and easy to read. Ensure the Community Emergency Hub is easy to get around for those with mobility challenges.

If you come across any information that could affect the community, the running of the Community Emergency Hub or the wider response to the emergency, pass it on to the Information team.



Information

This role collects and displays information on what is happening to help prioritise needs.

The role will:

Gather information from:

- All sources (e.g. people coming to Community Emergency Hub, officials).
- Monitor media and social media to understand what is happening, needs that are going unmet, and what other responders are doing.

Create a Situation Board to display information:

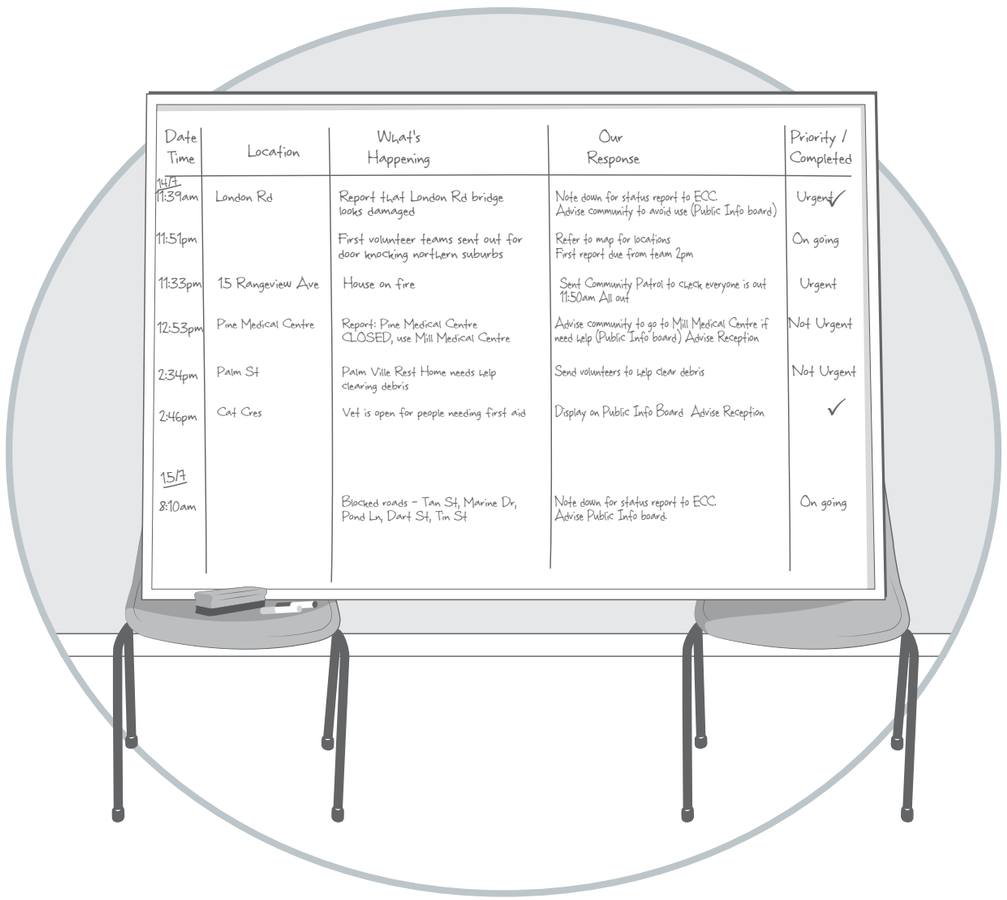
- Organise the Situation Board so information is easy-to-find and easy-to-read.
- Display maps from the Community Emergency Hub Box on walls.
- Update the Situation Board and maps, with:
  - Hazard locations (e.g. flooding, collapsed buildings).
  - Status of lifelines (e.g. tap water, utilities, road network).
  - Weather report.
  - Safety advice (e.g. locations to avoid, boil water).
- Mark if information is confirmed or unconfirmed, and when it was updated.

Identify information you need:

- Identify missing information that would be useful.
- Prioritise missing information to collect (e.g. locations to check).

Suggested Situation Board layout

Date & Time	When did you find out about it?
Location	Where is it? Record an address if possible.
What's happening	Brief summary of issue or information reported.
Our response	What you have done or plan to do about it, and who is taking care of it?
Priority / Completed	Lots of things may feel important, what needs to happen first? Mark when completed.



Collect information by asking new arrivals:

- What street did you come from?
- What was going on there?
- Does anyone there need help?

Find information by sending groups of volunteers into the community:

- Only send out groups as it is safer.
- Use established groups (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch, 4x4, faith groups).
- Plan where groups will go and when they should return.
- Tell the Communications Team which teams have gone where.
- Note volunteers' mobile phone numbers to stay in touch with them.



Communications

This role communicates important information within the Community Emergency Hub and to external audiences (e.g. the community and Emergency Coordination Centre).

The role will:

Send a Community Emergency Hub Status Report to the Emergency Coordination Centre:

- When the Community Emergency Hub opens and closes.
- Include information from the Situation Board:
  - Impacts (e.g. injuries, blocked roads) and hazard locations (e.g. damaged bridges).
  - Status of lifelines (e.g. tap water, utilities, road network).
  - Weather conditions.
  - Impacts you need extra help with.

Receive information from the Emergency Coordination Centre:

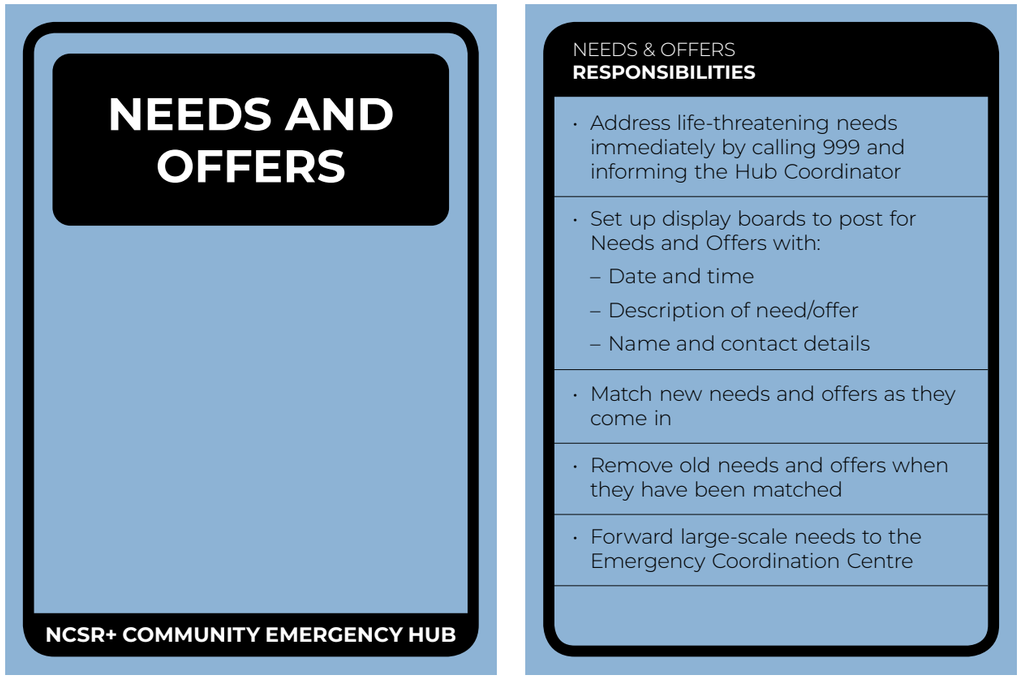
- Pass information to the Information role.
- Communicate information to the community.

Set up a Public Information Board to provide information to the community:

- Summarises information for the community from the Situation Board to describe:
  - What has happened.
  - How people can help themselves.
  - Safety advice.
- Positioned close to the entrance.
- Marks information with the time/date to indicate how old it is.
- Marks information with ‘confirmed’ or ‘unconfirmed’.

Receive information from the community and pass it to the Information role:

- Monitor communication channels so no messages are missed (e.g. broadcast radio).
- Collect from teams that are gathering information.



Needs and Offers

This role matches the needs in the community with the offers of support. People write their needs on a Needs Display Board and offers of help on an Offers Display Board. Community Emergency Hub volunteers match needs with offers (e.g. people needing accommodation are matched with appropriate offers).

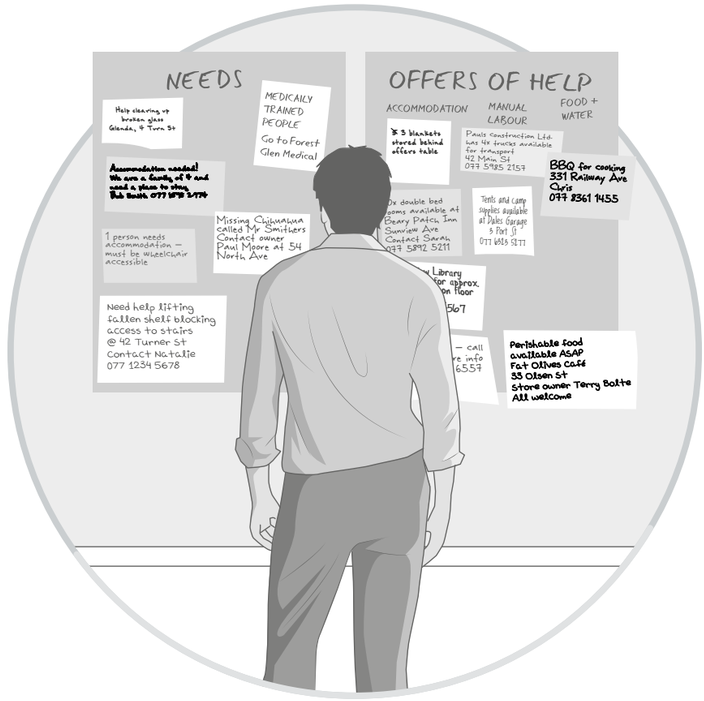
Address all life-threatening needs immediately

Phone 999. Tell the Hub Coordinator and Emergency Coordination Centre.

The role will:

Manage the Needs and Offers Display Boards:

- Set up display boards near the Community Emergency Hub entrance marked “Needs” and “Offers”.
- Write a need/offer onto a sticky note and put on display board. Write on the back of each sticky note:
  - Date/time of posting and expiry.
  - Contact details of who posts the sticky note.
- Group sticky notes into themes (e.g. labour).
- Keep display boards up-to-date and identify matches.
- Remove sticky notes when matches are made, or Need/Offer expires. Keep all sticky notes as a record of Community Emergency Hub activities.
- Forward large-scale needs (e.g. from a care home) and offers (e.g. from a supermarket) to the Hub Coordinator. Inform the Emergency Coordination Centre.





Reception

This role ensures that the facility is a friendly place that offers a bonding space for people to come together.

The role will:

Set up a Reception to welcome people:

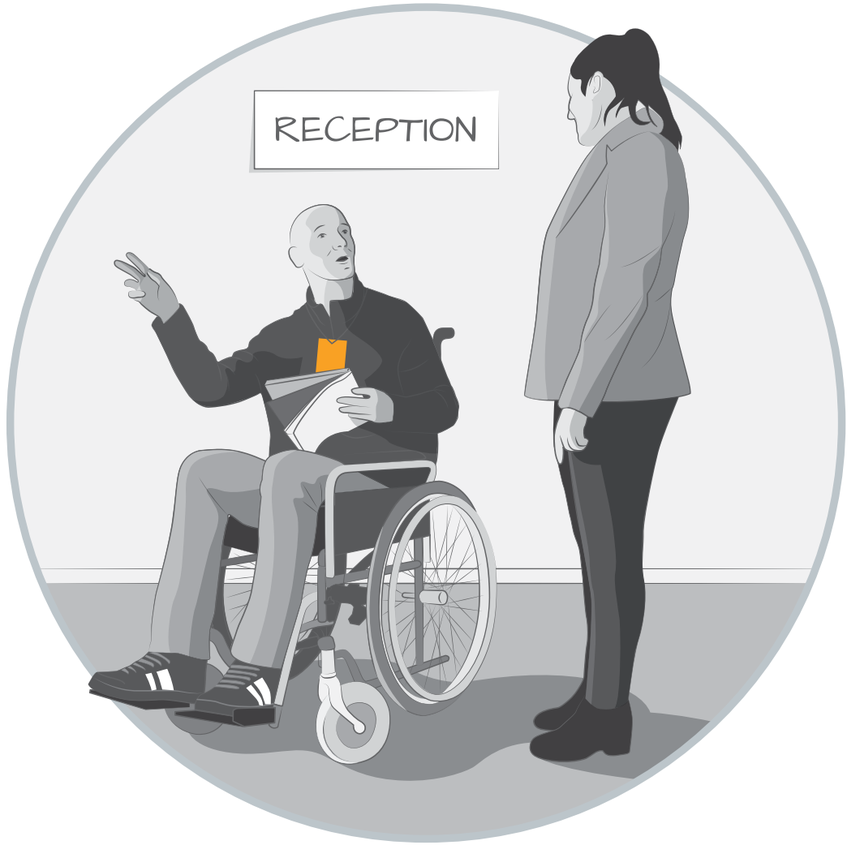
- Run a friendly reception to greet new arrivals and explain what the Community Emergency Hub is for.
- Ensure Reception Team is:
  - Calm, especially if people are upset, frustrated or angry.
  - Honest if they don't know the answer.

Set up a Community Space where people:

- Find a quiet space to sit, chat, and have a hot drink.
- Encourage a supportive environment, for example:
  - Listen to people as you would a distressed friend.
  - A smile goes a long way in stressful situations.

Keep the Community Emergency Hub tidy and safe:

- Tidy rubbish to avoid people being injured. Empty bins.
- Check building safety when conditions outside change.
- Keep the toilet clean.



5

Considering Community Emergency Hubs in recovery

Think long-term recovery

Working in the Community Emergency Hub, you may find yourself exercising leadership and problem solving. Some of the issues you will encounter will require outside help, but many may be solved by pooling the skills, resources, and connections that your community already has.

You may start thinking about the future: What about long-term challenges? How can the community continue to work together and support each other through long-term recovery?

Consider how your community can:

- **Help each other through recovery.** Those communities that are active, work together and support one another, can adapt and rebuild stronger than before.
- **Stay connected.** Maintaining existing relationships is important for the community's recovery. Some people may be evacuated or temporarily living outside the community. Help everyone stay connected so they can support one another. Set up phone trees, social media groups, email chains, and create spaces for people to meet in person.
- **Work together.** Keep alive the community's positive energy through the recovery process. For example, share stories of the community's successes and challenges. Consider how the community can share knowledge and creativity as challenges change from responding to immediate needs to proactively rebuilding the kind of community you want to live in.
- **Speak with a common voice.** Get your community's message heard by the local council and organisations that may contribute resources to help rebuild. Look for common goals that meet the needs of many community members and are inclusive of different needs. When a one-size-fits-all approach won't work, communicate that needs in your community are diverse.
- **Talk about well-being.** During and after a disruption it is natural to experience different and strong emotions. Give yourself time to adjust and connect with family, friends and others who were affected. Take care of yourself and each other. Remember it is okay to seek help. Re-establish routines and engage in healthy behaviours as these will help your ability to cope.
- **Stay organised.** There is no perfect answer to how your community will tackle recovery. Staying organised and proactive through recovery may not happen in the Community Emergency Hub itself, especially if it's located in a facility that needs to return to its business-as-usual function. Whatever the form and place, it's the connections made, the shared experiences, and people being active in their community that will make it possible to adapt and rebuild stronger than ever.

Recovery will present challenges. Strong communities face them together.

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