The organization evaluates the effectiveness of its Emergency Operations Plan.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.03.01.03

1. The organization activates its Emergency Operations Plan once a year at each site included in the plan, either in response to an actual emergency or as a planned exercise.
   
   Note: Planned exercises should focus on the organization's response to an emergency that is likely to affect continuation of care, treatment, or services. Exercises do not need to be conducted in each community served by the organization but should be based on a regional or county response strategy where applicable. Exercises that involve substitutes for patients (such as pillows, bundles, mannequins, or live volunteers) are acceptable.
20. For home health agencies and hospices providing care in the patient’s home that elect to use The Joint Commission deemed status option: The organization conducts an exercise to test the emergency plan at least annually. The organization is required to conduct either one community-based, full-scale exercise if available or a facility-based, functional exercise every other year. In the opposite year, the organization’s annual exercise includes, but is not limited to, one of the following:
- A second full-scale, community-based exercise
- A second facility-based, functional exercise
- Mock disaster drill
- Tabletop exercise or workshop that is led by a facilitator and includes a group discussion using a narrated, clinically relevant emergency scenario and a set of problem statements, directed messages, or prepared questions designed to challenge an emergency plan.

Note 1: If the organization experiences an actual emergency (natural or man-made) that requires activation of the emergency plan, the organization is exempt from engaging in its next required full-scale, community-based exercise or facility-based, functional exercise following the onset of the emergency event.

Note 2: See the Glossary for the definitions of community-based exercise, full-scale exercise, and functional exercise.