

2022 Christmas Blizzard – Winter Storm Elliott

WNY HOSPITAL PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE
PRESENTED BY: KALEIDA HEALTH, CATHOLIC HEALTH, AND ERIE COUNTY MEDICAL CENTER



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Introductions

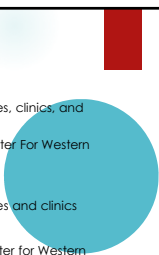
- ▶ Kaleida Health
 - ▶ Timothy Komacki – Director of Regulatory Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Oversight
 - ▶ Ryan Hejmanowski – Corporate Emergency Manager
- ▶ Catholic Health
 - ▶ Laura Dewey – Director of Emergency Management and Safety
- ▶ Erie County Medical Center
 - ▶ Dan McCartan – Emergency Manager



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Systems

- ▶ Kaleida Health
 - ▶ 6 Acute Care Hospitals, 2 LTC facilities, multiple off-site offices, clinics, and ambulatory surgery centers.
 - ▶ Oishei Children's Hospital is the Level I Pediatric Trauma Center For Western New York
- ▶ Catholic Health
 - ▶ 5 Acute Care Hospitals, 3 LTC facilities, multiple off-site offices and clinics
- ▶ Erie County Medical Center
 - ▶ 64 acre campus that includes the Adult Level I Trauma Center for Western New York, Behavioral Health Building with a Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program, LTC facility, and 2 multi-specialty office buildings.



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Winter Storm Elliott – 2022 Christmas Blizzard

- ▶ Longest Blizzard in continental US history under 5,000 feet of elevation.
- ▶ The region was hit with another snowstorm just weeks prior and still recovering from that storm. The storm produced up to 8 feet of snow in some areas.
- ▶ Over 50 deaths locally.
- ▶ 18,200 flights cancelled.

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Winter Storm Elliott – 2022 Christmas Blizzard

HEADLINE: Blizzard Warning issued December 24 at 1:56AM EST until December 25 at 7:00AM EST by NWS Buffalo

DESCRIPTION: ...BLIZZARD WARNING REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL 7 AM EST SUNDAY...

*WHAT...Blizzard conditions and very heavy lake effect snow will produce life threatening conditions. Storm total snow accumulations of 4 to 5 feet across the Buffalo Metro area, and 1 to 3 feet in surrounding areas. Winds gusting as high as 65 mph. Wind chills as cold as 15 to 25 below zero.

* WHERE...Niagara, Orleans,Erie, and Genesee counties.

* WHEN...Until 7 AM EST Sunday.

* IMPACTS...Travel will be impossible in the lake effect snow band. Areas of blowing snow will produce zero visibility. Very strong winds will cause extensive tree damage and power outages. The cold wind chills as low as 25 below zero could cause frostbite on exposed skin in as little as 30 minutes.

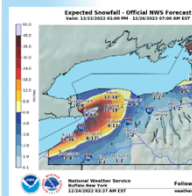
INSTRUCTIONS: Strong winds will cause significant blowing and drifting snow, frequently reducing visibilities to zero. Travel is strongly discouraged

Issued By: NWS Buffalo (Western New York)

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Storm Total Snow



Event Details:

- ✔ Storm total accumulations of 3 to 5 feet off Lake Erie, and 3 to 5 feet of Lake Ontario
- ✔ Strong winds will create significant blowing and drifting snow. Near zero visibility with whiteouts and localized blizzard conditions possible
- ✔ Nearly stationary snow bands today; snow bands will drop south of Buffalo late tonight and south of Watertown early Sunday evening

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Pre-storm planning and preparation

- ▶ Started HICS preparation calls 72-96 hours pre-storm.
- ▶ Participated in pre-storm briefing calls with National Weather Service, Erie County, NYS DOH, and WNY Hospital Coalition.
- ▶ Regular email updates to key leadership and stakeholders.
- ▶ Held twice daily situational briefing calls.
- ▶ Checked generators and fuel levels.
- ▶ Increased on hand inventory of linen, food, medical supplies, and EVS supplies.
- ▶ Decompressed inpatient census.

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Major storm related challenges

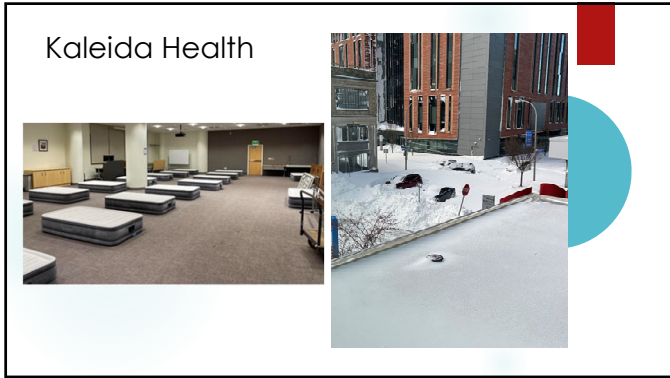
- ▶ Maintaining supply chain integrity
- ▶ Staffing shortages
- ▶ Adequate sleeping arrangements
- ▶ "Hoteling"
- ▶ EMS Limitations
- ▶ Morgue capacity
- ▶ Medications for staff, visitors, and discharged patients.
- ▶ Mental health resources

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Kaleida Health Lessons Learned

- ▶ The only skid steer for the downtown campus broke down on the second day of the storm.
- ▶ Conduct more Command Center activation drills throughout the year with the leadership teams at each site.
- ▶ Have more robust sleeping accommodation plans for staff. Ensuring the sleep areas are away from working areas.
- ▶ Increasing the frequency, the content, and the method of information distribution and communication to our staff.

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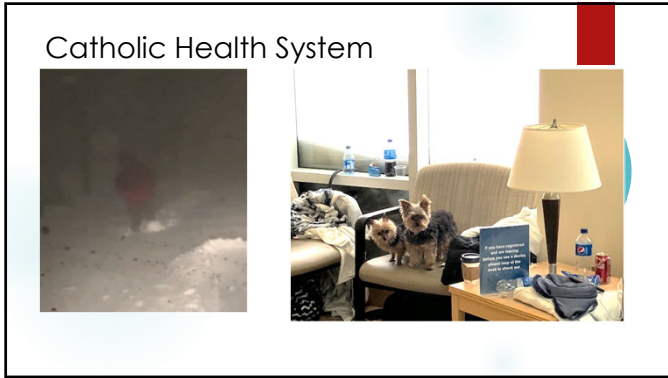
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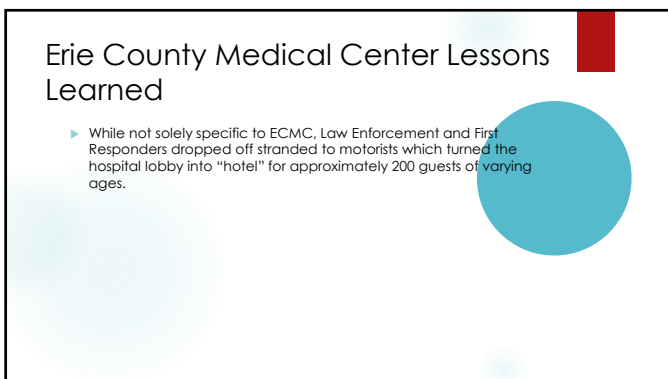
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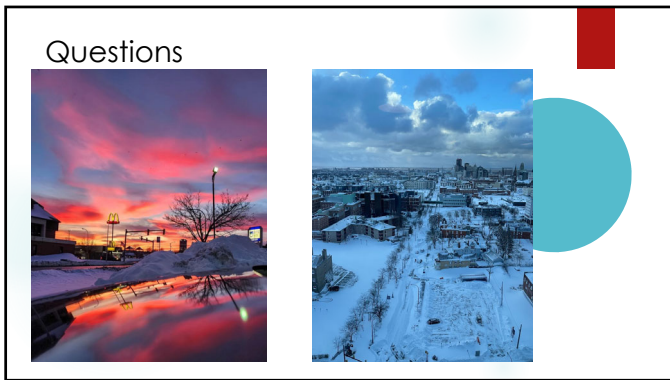
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