

eFINDS Quarterly Drill

Controller/Evaluator Handbook

[Date]

The Controller/Evaluator (C/E) Handbook describes the roles and responsibilities of exercise controllers and evaluators, and the procedures they should follow. Because the C/E Handbook contains information about the scenario and about exercise administration, it is distributed to only those individuals specifically designated as controllers or evaluators; it should not be provided to exercise players. The C/E Handbook may supplement the Exercise Plan (ExPlan) or be a standalone document.

# Exercise Overview

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Exercise Name** | eFINDS Quarterly Drill |
| **Exercise Dates** | [Indicate the start and end dates of the exercise] |
| **Scope** | The eFINDS Quarterly Drill is a series of small exercises designed to provide an opportunity for hospitals in the Sub-Regions of the Western Region Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition (WRHEPC) to maintain their patient tracking capabilities using the NYS DOH Evacuation of Facilities In Disaster System (eFINDS). The drill is limited to the simulated movement and tracking of patients using eFINDS. No actual movement of patients will occur. |
| **Mission Area(s)** | Response, Recovery |
| **Core Capabilities** | Continuity of Health Care Service Delivery |
| **Objectives** | Assess the Hospital’s capability to plan for and coordinate health care evacuation and relocation using the NYS DOH Evacuation of Facilities In Disaster System (eFINDS). |
| **Threat or Hazard** | Hospital Evacuation , Medical Surge |
| **Scenario** | One of the Sub-Region partner hospitals has experienced an emergency requiring the evacuation of patients. The NYS DOH eFINDS will be used to track the movement of patients between facilities. The evacuation and receipt of patients will be completed within 24 hours. |
| **Sponsor** | Western Region Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition |
| **Participating Organizations** | [List Sub-Region Healthcare Facilities participating in the quarterly drills.] |
| **Point of Contact** | [Insert the name, title, agency, address, phone number, and email address of the primary exercise POC (e.g., exercise director or exercise sponsor)] |

# General Information

## Exercise Objectives and Core Capabilities

The following exercise objectives in Table 1 describe the expected outcomes for the exercise. The objectives are linked to core capabilities, which are distinct critical elements necessary to achieve the specific mission area(s). The objectives and aligned core capabilities are guided by elected and appointed officials and selected by the Exercise Planning Team.

| Exercise Objective | Core Capability |
| --- | --- |
| Assess the Hospital’s capability to plan for and coordinate health care evacuation and relocation using the NYS DOH Evacuation of Facilities In Disaster System (eFINDS). | Continuity of Health Care Service Delivery |

Table 1. Exercise Objectives and Associated Core Capabilities

## Participant Roles and Responsibilities

The term *participant* encompasses many groups of people, not just those playing in the exercise. For the purpose of the eFINDS Quarterly Drill, participants involved in the exercise, and their respective roles and responsibilities, are described according to whether they are participating at the “Sending” facility or a “Receiving” facility:

* **Players.** Players are personnel who have an active role in discussing or performing their regular roles and responsibilities during the exercise. Players discuss or initiate actions in response to the simulated emergency. In this exercise the players are the eFINDS Data Reporters and/or eFINDS Administrators at each facility.
* **Controllers.** Controllers plan and manage exercise play, set up and operate the exercise site. Controllers direct the pace of the exercise, provide key data to players, and may prompt or initiate certain player actions to ensure exercise continuity. In addition, they issue exercise material to players as required, monitor the exercise timeline, and supervise the safety of all exercise participants.
* **Evaluators.** Evaluators evaluate and provide feedback on a designated functional area of the exercise. Evaluators observe and document performance against established capability targets and critical tasks, in accordance with the Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs).

## Exercise Assumptions and Artificialities

In any exercise, assumptions and artificialities may be necessary to complete play in the time allotted and/or account for logistical limitations. Exercise participants should accept that assumptions and artificialities are inherent in any exercise, and should not allow these considerations to negatively impact their participation.

### Assumptions

Assumptions constitute the implied factual foundation for the exercise and, as such, are assumed to be present before the exercise starts. The following assumptions apply to the exercise:

* The exercise is conducted in a no-fault learning environment wherein capabilities, plans, systems, and processes will be evaluated.
* Exercise simulation contains sufficient detail to allow players to react to information and situations as they are presented as if the simulated incident were real.
* Participating agencies may need to balance exercise play with real-world emergencies. Real-world emergencies take priority.

### Artificialities

During this exercise, the following artificialities apply:

* The scenario requiring the simulation evacuation of patients is a generic emergency incident.
* Hospitals may choose to limit activation to those serving as eFINDS Administrators and Data Recorders.
* The evacuating patients will be represented by Patient Profile Cards with eFINDS barcodes.

# Exercise Logistics

## Safety

Exercise participant safety takes priority over exercise events. The following general requirements apply to the exercise:

* The drill consists primarily of administrative tasks in a controlled environment.
* For an emergency that requires assistance, use the phrase **“real-world emergency.”**

# Post-exercise and Evaluation Activities

## Debriefings

Post-exercise debriefings aim to collect sufficient relevant data to support effective evaluation and improvement planning.

### Hot Wash

At the conclusion of exercise play, Controllers facilitate a Hot Wash to allow players to discuss strengths and areas for improvement, and Evaluators to seek clarification regarding player actions and decision-making processes. The Hot Wash should not exceed 30 minutes.

### Quarterly Review

During the subsequent Quarterly Sub-Regional meeting the participating facilities will discuss lessons learned from the drill. The “Sending” facility will present the completed e-FINDS Quarterly Drill Report for tracking the results of the exercise. The group will adjust the drill and/or the schedule to improve the exercise prior to the next iteration.

## Evaluation

### Exercise Evaluation Guides

EEGs have been prepared for the drills to assist evaluators in collecting relevant exercise observations. The EEGs include both “Sending” and “Receiving” Capability Targets and Critical Tasks. Evaluators may limit their observations according to the role their facility is filling during the drill.

### After-Action Report

The AAR summarizes key information related to evaluation. The AAR primarily focuses on the analysis of core capabilities, including capability performance, strengths, and areas for improvement. Each Sub-Region committee will prepare an annual report that captures the lessons learned throughout the series of quarterly drills for the year.

### Improvement Plan

The Sub-Region will identify specific corrective actions, assign them to responsible parties, and establishes target dates for their completion.

# Participant Information and Guidance

## Exercise Rules

The following general rules govern exercise play:

* Real-world emergency actions take priority over exercise actions.
* Exercise players will comply with real-world emergency procedures, unless otherwise directed by the control staff.
* All communications (including written, radio, telephone, and e-mail) during the exercise will begin and end with the statement **“This is an exercise.”**

## Players Instructions

Players should follow certain guidelines before, during, and after the exercise to ensure a safe and effective exercise.

### Before the Exercise

* Review appropriate organizational plans, procedures, and exercise support documents.
* Sign in when you arrive.

### During the Exercise

* Respond to exercise events and information as if the emergency were real, unless otherwise directed by an exercise controller.
* If you do not understand the scope of the exercise, or if you are uncertain about an organization’s participation in an exercise, ask a controller.
* Speak when you take an action. This procedure will ensure that evaluators are aware of critical actions as they occur.
* Players at the “Sending” facility will perform the following eFINDS functions using the Patient Profile Cards and associated eFINDS barcodes:
* Activate eFINDS.
* Establish an eFINDS Operation.
* Enter simulated patients into the eFINDS Operation as evacuating patients.
* “Send” simulated patients to the designated “Receiving” facilities according to the Controller provided patient distribution plan.
* Players at the “Receiving” facility will perform the following eFINDS functions using the Patient Profile Cards and associated eFINDS barcodes:
* Activate eFINDS within 24 hours of notification.
* Locate the Operation associated with the drill.
* “Receive” simulated patients from the designated “Sending” facility according to the Controller provided patient profile cards.
* Report completion to the facility Controller.

### After the Exercise

* Participate in the Hot Wash at your venue with controllers and evaluators.
* Complete the Participant Feedback Form. This form allows you to comment candidly on emergency response activities and exercise effectiveness. Provide the completed form to a controller or evaluator.

Provide any notes or materials generated from the exercise to your controller or evaluator for review and inclusion in the AAR.

# Controller Information and Guidance

## Exercise Control Overview

Exercise control maintains exercise scope, pace, and integrity during exercise conduct. The control structure in a well-developed exercise ensures that exercise play assesses objectives in a coordinated fashion at all levels and at all locations for the duration of the exercise.

## Exercise Control Documentation

### Controller Package

The controller package consists of the C/E Handbook, Patient Profile Cards (App. C), Participant Sign-In Sheets (App. B) and eFINDS Quarterly Report (App. F).

### Incident Simulation

Because the exercise is of limited duration and scope, certain details will be simulated. Venue controllers are responsible for providing players with the physical description of what would fully occur at the incident sites and surrounding areas. Evacuating Patients will be simulated through the use of Patient Profile Cards and barcodes.

### Scenario Tools

The Patient Profile Cards and the distribution plan for “evacuating” patients provide the scenario for the drill. These products are prepared by the “Sending” facility Controller prior to and distributed during the preceding quarterly Sub-Region meeting.

## Exercise Control Structure

Control of the exercise is accomplished through an exercise control structure. The control structure is the framework that allows controllers to communicate and coordinate with other controllers at other exercise venues to deliver and track exercise information. Each facility will assign a Controller to manage the drill at their site. The “Sending” Facility Controller is the senior controller for the exercise.

## Controller Instructions

### Before the Exercise

* Review eFINDS plans, procedures, and protocols [i.e. eFINDSv3.0 Quick Reference Guide (App. D); eFINDSv3.0 Creating an Operation Quick Reference Guide (APP E)].
* Review appropriate exercise package materials, including the objectives and controller instructions.
* The “Sending” facility Controller is responsible for communicating the beginning (STARTEX) and completion (ENDEX) of the drill.
* Prepare the Patient Profile Cards with barcodes to represent “evacuating” patients.
* Prepare a patient distribution plan designating the “Receiving” facility for each patient.
* Distribute Patient profile Cards to facility representatives at the prior quarterly Sub-Region meeting. Retain a copy of the distribution plan and each Patient Profile Card for use at the “Sending” facility.
* Coordinate with the NYS DOH, Regional Representative for STARTEX and ENDEX message through HERDS.
* Be prepared to make direct STARTEX and ENDEX notifications to participating hospitals.
* “Receiving” facility Controllers will acknowledge receipt of the STARTEX and ENDEX messages.
* Bring the provided Patient Profile Cards for your facility to the exercise location.
* Ensure that designated players with appropriate eFINDS roles have been notified of the start of the drill and expected time of completion.

### During the Exercise

* The “Sending” Facility Controller will begin the drill by providing their eFINDS operators with the “evacuating” Patient Profile Cards.
* Instruct operators to establish an eFINDS Operation for patient evacuation.
* Provide Patient Profile Cards with barcodes.
* Provide the patient distribution plan to designate which matches patients to “Receiving” hospitals.
* Notify Receiving facility Controllers when all patients have been “sent”.
* “Receiving” facility Controllers will provide their eFINDS operators with the Patient Profile Cards which correspond to the patients that they are expected to receive.
* Instruct operators to activate eFINDS and locate the appropriate Operation.
* Provide Patient Profile Cards with barcodes.
* Notify “Sending” facility Controllers when all patients have been “received” (within 24 hours).
* Begin and end all exercise communications with the statement, [**“This is an exercise.”]**

### After the Exercise

* Distribute copies of Participant Feedback Forms and pertinent documentation.
* All controllers are expected to conduct a Hot Wash at their facility and, in coordination with the venue evaluator, take notes on findings identified by exercise players.
* At exercise termination, summarize your notes from the exercise and Hot Wash, and prepare for the After Action Meeting at the next quarterly Sub-Region meeting.
* The Sending facility Controller will complete e-FINDS Quarterly Drill Report for tracking the results of the drill. This form is the documentation for completion of the drill.

# Evaluator Information and Guidance

## Exercise Evaluation Overview

Exercise evaluation assesses an organization’s capabilities to accomplish a mission, function, or objective. Evaluation provides an opportunity to assess performance of critical tasks to capability target levels. The limited duration and scope of this drill may allow for one person to fill both the Controller and Evaluator roles.

## Evaluation Documentation

### Evaluator Package

The evaluator package contains this C/E Handbook, EEGs, and eFINDS [i.e. eFINDSv3.0 Quick Reference Guide (App. D); eFINDSv3.0 Creating an Operation Quick Reference Guide (APP E)].

### Exercise Evaluation Guides

EEGs provide a consistent tool to guide exercise observation and data collection. EEGs are aligned to exercise objectives and core capabilities, and list the relevant capability targets and critical tasks. Data collected in EEGs will be used to develop the analysis of capabilities in the AAR.

Evaluators should complete all assigned EEGs and submit to the facility Controller at the conclusion of the exercise. The facility Controller will provide evaluator submissions to the “Sending” facility Controller for review at the quarterly meeting.

### After Action Report/Improvement Plan

The main focus of the AAR is the analysis of core capabilities. For each core capability exercised, the AAR includes a rating of how the exercise participants performed, as well as strengths and areas for improvement.

At the conclusion of the Grant Year, the Sub-Region committee will draft an AAR, and determine which areas for improvement require further action. Corrective actions are consolidated in the IP, which is included as an appendix to the AAR.

## Evaluator Instructions

### General

* Avoid personal conversations with players.
* Do not give information to players about event progress or other participants’ methods of problem resolution. Players are expected to obtain information through their own resources.

### Before the Exercise

* Review eFINDS plans, procedures, and protocols [i.e. eFINDSv3.0 Quick Reference Guide (App. D); eFINDSv3.0 Creating an Operation Quick Reference Guide (APP E)].
* Review appropriate exercise materials, including the exercise schedule and evaluator instructions.
* Review the EEGs and other supporting materials for to ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the core capabilities, capability targets, and critical tasks you are assigned to evaluate.
* Report to the exercise check-in location at the time designated and meet with the exercise Controller.

### During the Exercise

* Stay in proximity to players.
* Use EEGs to document performance relative to exercise objectives, core capabilities, capability targets, and critical tasks.
* Focus on critical tasks, as specified in the EEGs.
* Your primary duty is to document performance of core capabilities. After the exercise, that information will be used to determine whether the exercise capability targets were effectively met and to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

### After the Exercise

* Participate in the Hot Wash, and take notes on findings identified by players. Before the Hot Wash, do not discuss specific issues or problems with participants.
* Complete and submit all EEGs and other documentation to the facility Controller at the end of the exercise.

### Using Exercise Evaluation Guides

#### Terminology

The EEGs are structured to capture information specifically related to the evaluation requirements developed by the Exercise Planning Team. The following evaluation requirements are documented in each EEG:

* **Core capabilities:** The distinct critical elements necessary to achieve a specific mission area (e.g., prevention). To assess both capacity and gaps, each core capability includes capability targets.
* **Capability target(s):** The performance thresholds for each core capability; they state the exact *amount* of capability that players aim to achieve. Capability targets are typically written as quantitative or qualitative statements.
* **Critical tasks:** The distinct elements required to perform a core capability; they describe *how* the capability target will be met. Critical tasks generally include the activities, resources, and responsibilities required to fulfill capability targets. Capability targets and critical tasks are based on operational plans, policies, and procedures to be exercised and tested during the exercise.
* **Performance ratings:** The summary description of performance against target levels. Performance ratings include both Target Ratings, describing how exercise participants performed relative to each capability target, and Core Capability Ratings, describing overall performance relative to entire the core capability.

#### Documenting Observations

For each EEG, evaluators provide a target rating, observation notes and an explanation of the target rating, and a final core capability rating. In order to efficiently complete these sections of the EEG, evaluators should focus their observations on the capability targets and critical tasks listed in the EEG.

Observation notes should include *if* and *how* quantitative or qualitative targets were met. For example, a capability target might state, “*Within 4 hours of the incident….”* Notes on that target should include the actual time required for exercise players to complete the critical tasks. Additionally, observations should include:

* How the target was or was not met;
* Pertinent decisions made and information gathered to make decisions;
* Requests made and how requests were handled;
* Resources utilized;
* Plans, policies, procedures, or legislative authorities used or implemented; and
* Any other factors contributed to the results.

Evaluators should also note if an obvious cause or underlying reason resulted in players not meeting a capability target or critical task. However, the evaluators should not include recommendations in the EEGs. As part of the after-action and improvement planning processes, elected and appointed officials will review and confirm observations documented in the AAR and determine areas for improvement requiring further action.

#### Assigning Ratings

Based on their observations, evaluators assign a target rating for each capability target listed on the EEG*.* Evaluators then consider all target ratings for the core capability and assign an overall core capability rating. The rating scale includes four ratings:

* Performed without Challenge (P)
* Performed with Some Challenges (S)
* Performed with Major Challenges (M)
* Unable to be Performed (U)

Definitions for each of these ratings are included in the EEG.

### Placement and Monitoring

Evaluators should be located so they can observe player actions and hear conversations without interfering with those activities.

# Appendix A: Exercise Schedule

| **Quarter** | **Initiating Facility** |
| --- | --- |
| 1st Quarter GY [20xx] | Hospital [A] |
| 2nd Quarter GY [20xx] | Hospital [B] |
| 3rd Quarter GY [20xx] | Hospital [C] |
| 4th Quarter GY [20xx] | Hospital [D] |

# Appendix B: Participants Sign-In



**Western Region Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition**

**eFINDS Quarterly Drill**

[Facility Name]

[Date of Drill]

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| NAME (print clearly) | TITLE | AGENCY | INITIALS |
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# Appendix C: Sample Patient Profile Card

Patient Name: John Doe

Date of Birth: 7/4/1976

Gender: Male

Special Needs/Risks: None

Barcode No:



# Appendix D: eFINDS Quick Reference Guide

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# Appendix E: eFINDS Creating an Operation Quick Reference Guide

# Appendix F: eFINDS Quarterly Drill Report

| **Drill Information** |
| --- |
| Initiating Facility |  |
| Facilitator Name |  |
| Facilitator Phone & Email |  |
| Operation Name |  |
| Drill Date |  |
| Drill Time |  |

| **Patient Tracking Information** |
| --- |
| Patient Name | Receiving Facility | Date & Time Sent | Date & Time Received |
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# Appendix G: Acronyms

| **Acronym** | **Term** |
| --- | --- |
| AAR | After Action Report |
| App | Appendix |
| C/E | Controller/Evaluator |
| DHS | U.S. Department of Homeland Security |
| EEG | Exercise Evaluation Guide |
| eFINDS | Evacuation of Facilities In Disaster System |
| ENDEX | End of Exercise |
| ExPlan | Exercise Plan |
| HSEEP | Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program |
| NYS DOH | New York State Department of Health |
| POC | Point of Contact |
| STARTEX | Start of Exercise |
| WRHEPC | Western Region Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition |
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