



Poll Reveals Lack of Preparedness in The Face of Increasingly Frequent Disasters

One Week Ahead of Hurricane Season, Many Americans Remain Unprepared and Reliant on State and Local Resources

WASHINGTON, D.C. – May 29, 2019: Healthcare Ready today released a new national survey of 1,245 adults, which found that most Americans (54%) are aware they or their family could be impacted by a disaster in the next five years, yet more than half (51%) do not have an emergency plan in place. Identification of a natural disaster (37%) as the type of disaster they're most concerned will affect their community exceeds worry about terrorist attacks (16%), commonly occurring disease outbreaks (7%) or cyber-attacks (5%), among others. The poll was conducted by YouGov, an international polling service, for Healthcare Ready, a Washington D.C.-based national nonprofit public-private partnership focused on meeting the needs of patients and communities amid disaster.

"More Americans expect that a major disaster will impact them or their family than in previous years, but we've not seen an increase in household emergency planning alongside this awareness," said Nicolette Louissaint, Ph.D., executive director of Healthcare Ready. "For the fourth year in a row, this poll reveals a gap in preparedness at an individual level and emphasizes the need to improve readiness to ensure residents are prepared for the disasters that will inevitably come."

The potential impact of this gap in individual preparedness is compounded by the fact that over three in ten Americans (31%) feel their state and local government are well-resourced and prepared to support them during an emergency, while nearly four in ten (38%) say the same of their local community organizations. Since this may not always be true, and all disasters are local, these findings shed light on the need to develop tailored, local preparedness efforts and consider community vulnerabilities in planning.

The survey was conducted (May 10 - 13, 2019) and included the following key insights:

- **Thirty-seven percent** of Americans can go **a week or less** without their medications or medical devices before facing a medical crisis.
- **Only 40% of Americans** could list all their prescription details, including dosage and prescribing doctor, if they had to evacuate their homes without their medications or medical supplies, up from 2018 (35%).
- **Thirty-eight percent** of Americans feel the federal government lacks appropriate funding for disaster response and recovery, an increase from [31% in May 2017](#).

"In the past two years, we've experienced unprecedented disasters, including wildfires, floods and hurricanes, which severely impacted communities across the country," continued Dr. Louissaint. "As the harsh realities of disaster become clearer and more frequent than ever before, we must use these learnings to pinpoint the most pressing needs within our

communities *ahead of time*. The data shows how little time most Americans have before they face a medical crisis. This critical time should be spent implementing effective response and recovery protocols that can address dire medical needs we will see during a crisis.”

Below are additional tips to help ensure more communities can prioritize preparedness:

- Bookmark resources to know the status of pharmacies and other healthcare resources during a crisis. Healthcare Ready’s Rx Open tool can help patients find open, nearby pharmacies at <https://www.healthcareready.org/rxopen> or <https://www.rxopen.org>.
- Discuss evacuation plans, meeting points and support for family members and neighbors, especially the medically fragile, who may need help.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about specific preparedness actions you should take to manage health conditions (including chronic conditions) during a disaster.
- Keep a written list of prescriptions, including dosage information, in a safe space. Healthcare Ready has a free printable card at www.healthcareready.org/rx-on-the-run.
- Prepare an emergency kit with food, water, flashlights, batteries, blankets, clothing and medical supplies for either sheltering-in-place, or if you must evacuate.

Now in its fourth year, Healthcare Ready’s survey provides useful insights and benchmarks about Americans’ concerns and priorities regarding disaster preparedness. As the convener for both the public and private sectors, Healthcare Ready is poised to tackle systematic challenges that exist within the preparedness space to improve community resilience.

For more information on the survey and to view the full results please visit <https://www.healthcareready.org/programs/community-resilience>.

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About Healthcare Ready

Healthcare Ready is a nonprofit organization that serves as a public-private partnership to mitigate community and patient disruptions amid crisis. By forging partnerships and increasing communication between the healthcare supply chain and government (federal, state, local), Healthcare Ready minimizes the impact of disruptions on community health and wellbeing year-round. The organization supports private sector stakeholders within the U.S. healthcare supply chain and government agencies to sustain the flow of lifesaving products and resources to patients during a crisis.

About the YouGov survey

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,245 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 10th – 13th May 2019. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all US adults (aged 18+).

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