

Disability Information & Alert Network (DIAN) for Hampton Roads Concept

Goal

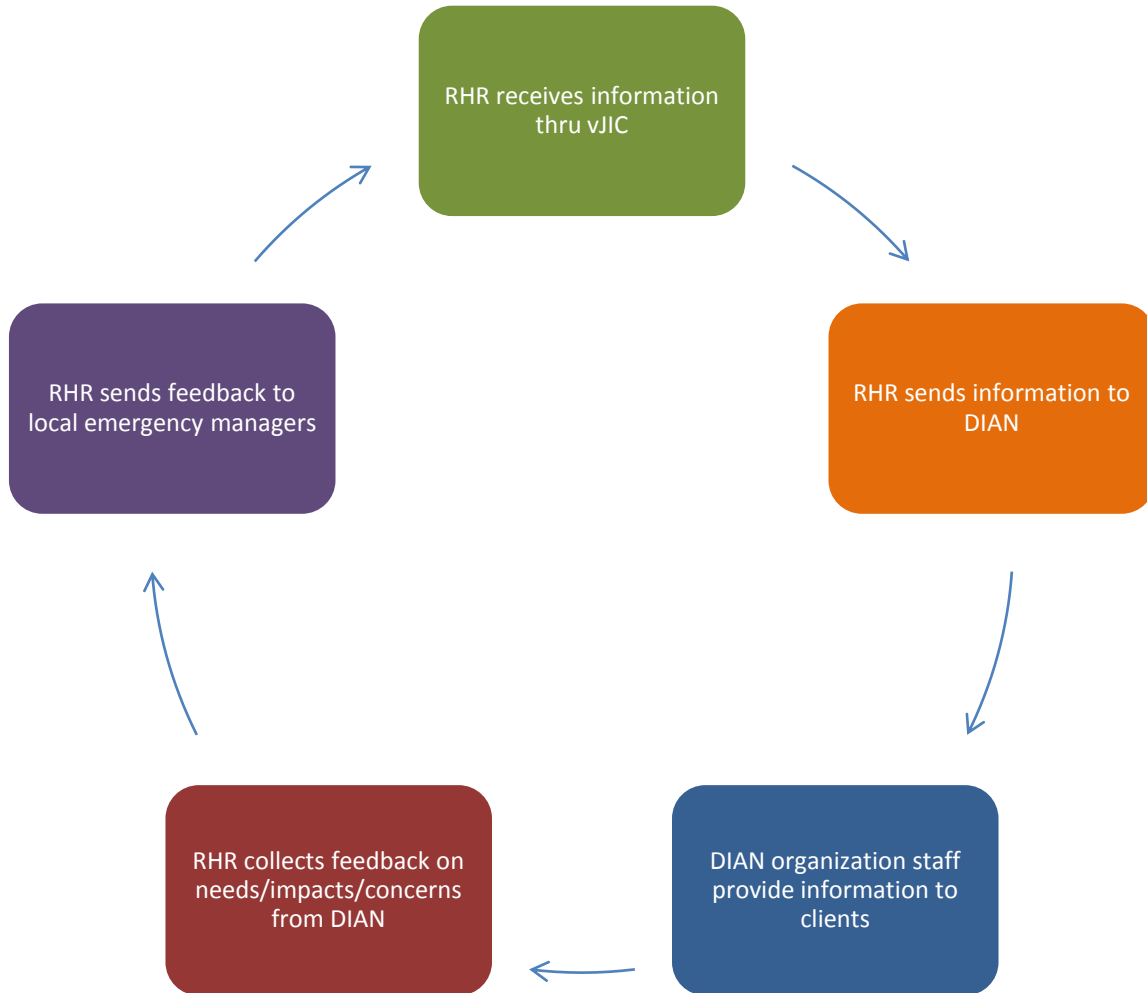
Provide a tool for emergency managers to quickly provide emergency public information (EPI) to a large percentage of the disability community with minimal staffing/resources.

Concept

The DIAN concept is based upon New York City's Special Needs Advance Warning System. Local and regional service agencies and organizations work with people with disabilities (PWDs) every day and thus have the potential to enhance effectiveness in reaching this population during and after an event. The DIAN program aims to build on these organizations' relationship of trust and credibility with these individuals. The organizations maintain up to date contact information as part of their day-to-day operations and have an understanding of their individual clients' needs. The DIAN program builds upon these intrinsic advantages to create a network for disseminating emergency public information to PWD.

The concept of the DIAN program is to collect information provided to Ready Hampton Roads (RHR), the regional public information system, by the localities and other RHR participating organizations and provide it to DIAN participant organizations. These organizations' staff use their contact lists to provide the information to PWDs within the region. The Regional Inclusive Emergency Planner or another position or agency within the region would host daily or weekly (frequency of calls determined by the needs of the

event) conference calls with this network during an event to allow them to provide input and feedback on how the event is impacting their clients.



Potential Problems

NYC has identified several potential problems with their program which DIAN will need to address:

- Participating organization staff availability after a large-scale event
- Alternate methods of communications if land and cell phone lines are unusable

The Regional Inclusive Emergency Planner for Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) has identified potential problem areas specific to the DIAN program and implementing this program at a regional versus local level:

- Process for requesting activation of the program
- Process for collecting information from the local emergency management agency
- Potential legal liability for the HRPDC and participating organizations if either or both are unable to provide EPI for any reason
- How participating organizations will provide additional information, answer questions, or transfer critical information, such as a need for ambulance transportation to a medical shelter or individuals choosing to shelter in place but have electricity-dependent equipment, to local emergency management/emergency operations centers
- Documentation of calls and interactions
- Reimbursement of staff time, if possible
- Use of regional volunteers to assist in making calls

Tasks

In addition to determining the solutions to the issues mentioned above, the following tasks have been identified as necessary for creating and implementing this program. This list is not exhaustive and will be amended as necessary.

1. Create workgroup consisting of emergency managers, community agency representatives, and individuals with disabilities.
2. Develop Standard Operating Guidelines for program.

3. Develop Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement (to be determined at a later time) for use with participating agencies and organizations.
4. Identify agencies and organizations to become participants.
5. Enter into MOU/MOA with participating agencies and organizations.
6. Provide participant organizations' staff, local public information officers, and emergency managers training on the program, provision of EPI, and use of ReadyHR.
7. Conduct initial exercise to test program.
8. Ensure DIAN is included in regional and local exercises that test public information systems.

