First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Crisis Response

By: Crisis Response Panel
Vancouver Coastal – October 22, 2014

FNHA Service Approach to Crisis Response

A crisis is defined **as an extraordinary circumstance that significantly challenges community capacity to respond.** We are gearing our response towards two categories of crisis including:

- Emergency Management: Flooding, forest fire, earthquake, landslide, industrial explosion, hazardous materials, and pandemic and,

- Mental Wellness Incident: attempted or completed suicide, accidental death or injury, violent death.

FNHA Guiding Principles

The guiding principles informing the FNHA approach include:

- removing administrative burden from communities in crisis,

- increasing our discipline in responding, and

- reorienting clinical and program staff to provide more direct supports to communities in crisis.

FNHA Approach

As a Wellness Partner to protect health, safety and well-being the FNHA proposes the following approach:

- Our **relationship** with the community is of utmost importance
- Our response is **timely**
- Our response is **coordinated**
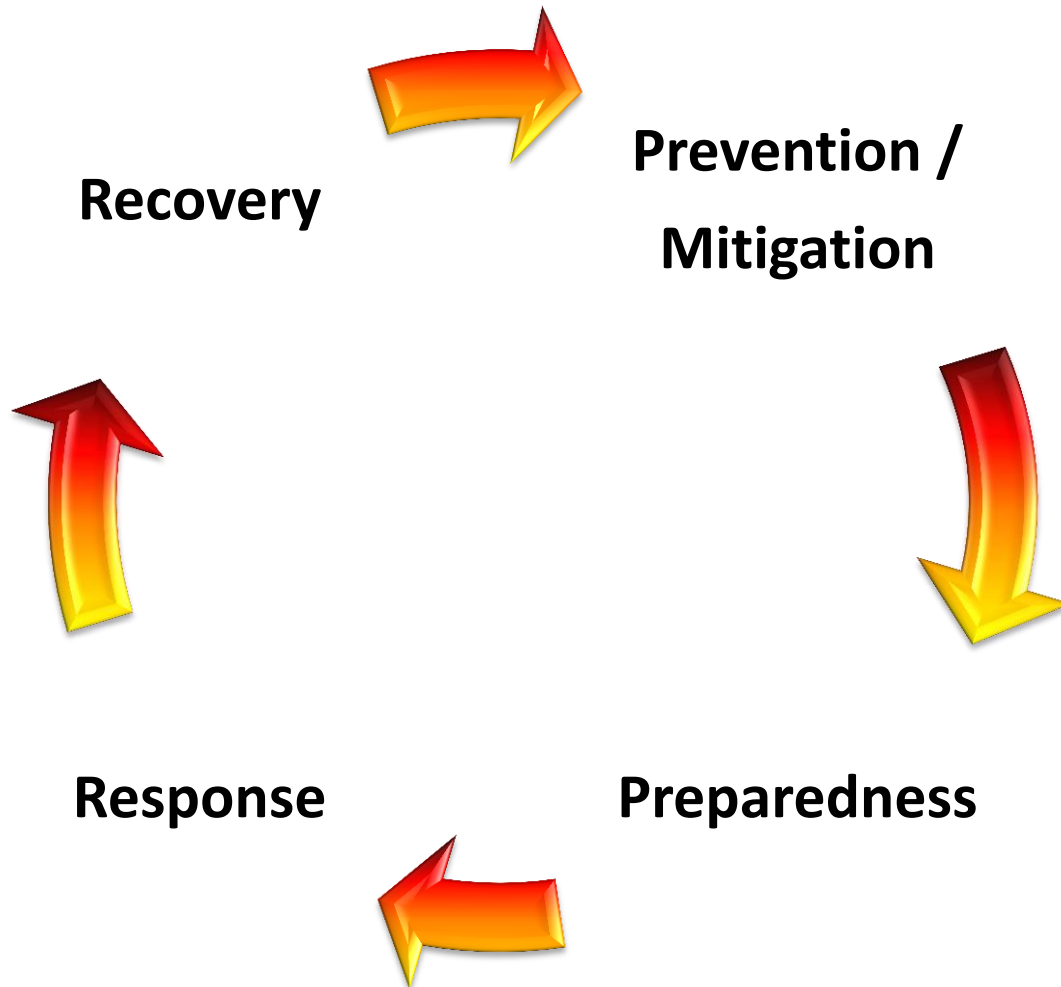- Our response is **holistic**

Outline

- Four Pillars of Emergency Management

- Defining Crisis

- Emergency Management Structure in BC

- Roles and Responsibilities
  - Prevention / Mitigation
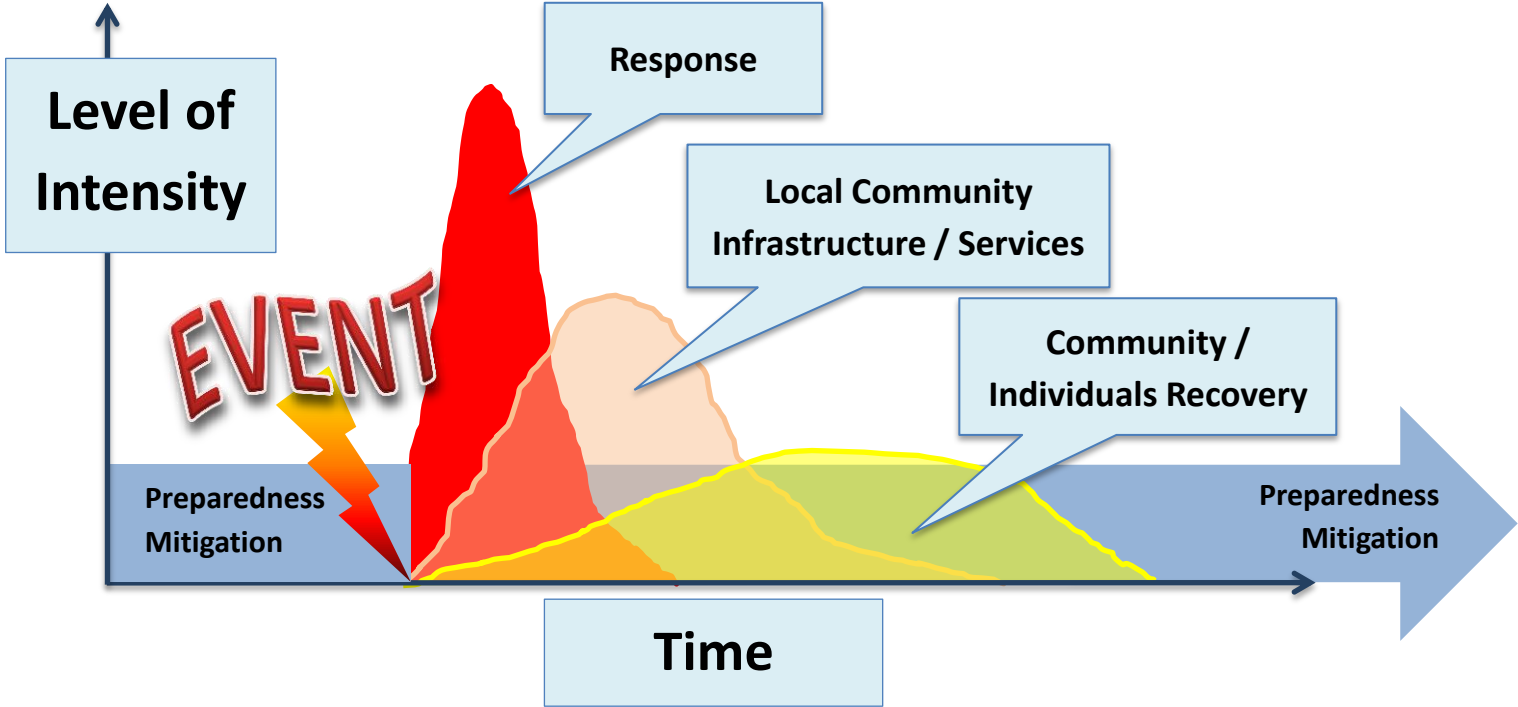 - Preparedness
  - Response
  - Recovery

- Conclusion

Crisis Response

Categories of Crisis

(1) Emergency Management

- Flooding, forest fire, earthquake, landslide, industrial explosion, hazardous materials
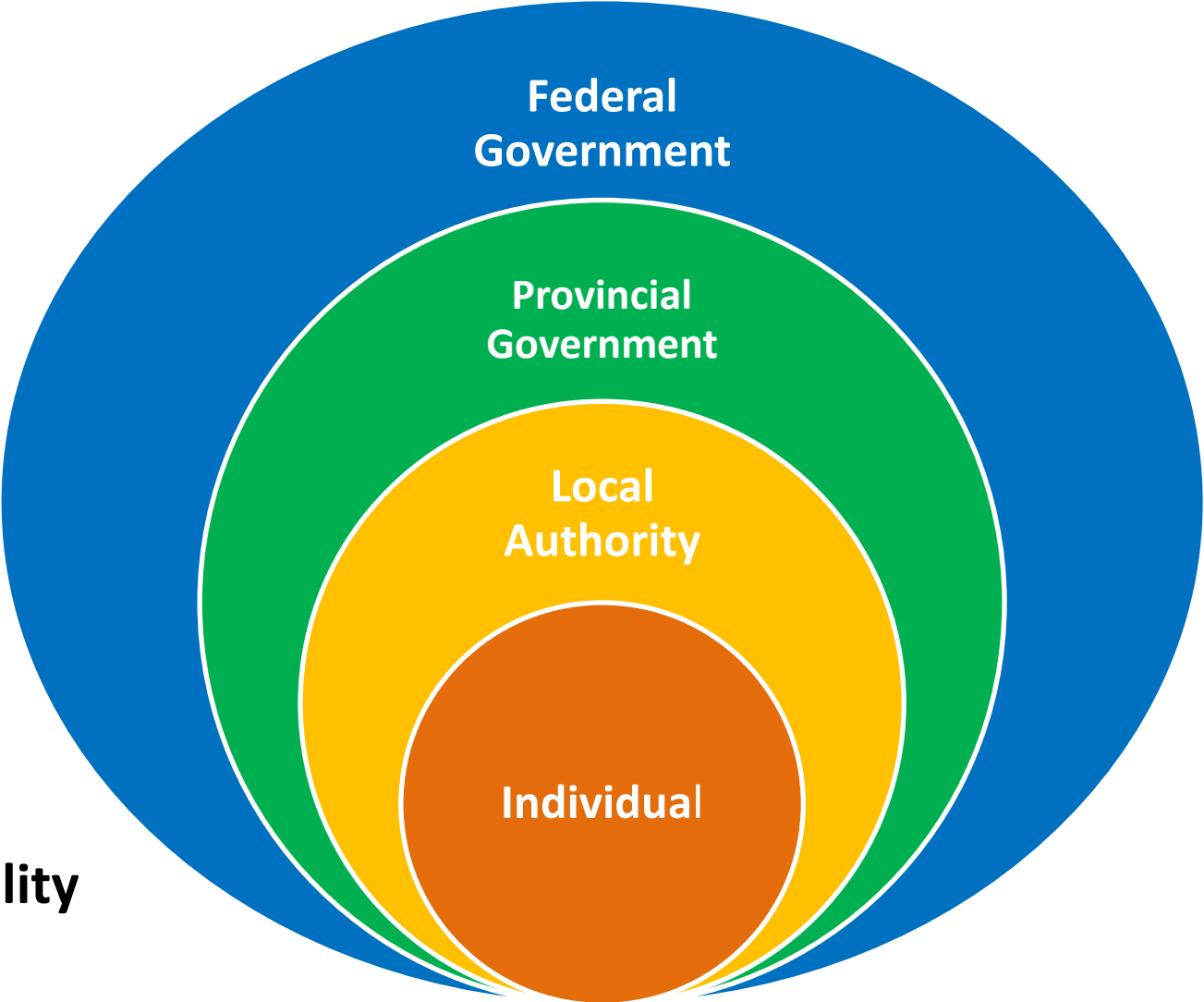- Pandemic

Categories of Crisis

(2) Mental Wellness Incident

- Attempted or completed suicide
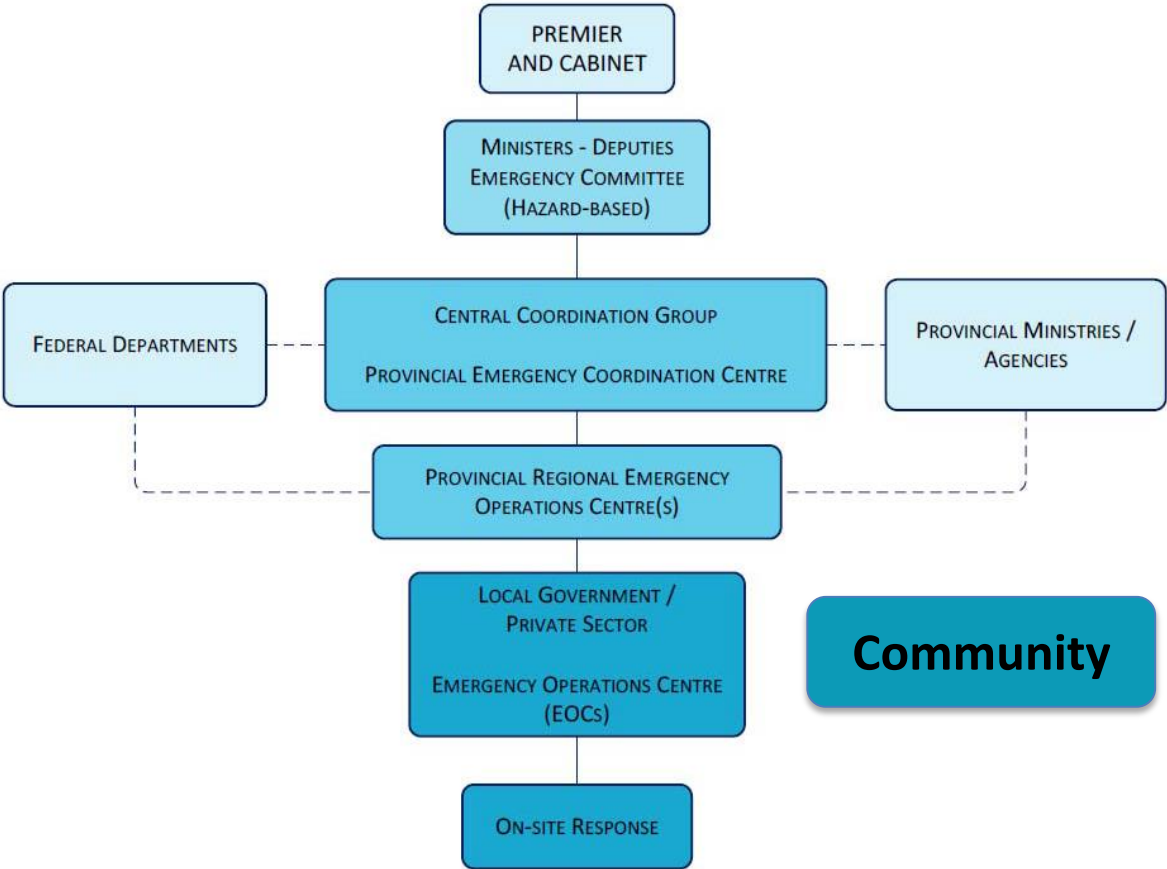- Accidental death or injury
- Violent death

Emergency Management Partners

Federal
Government

Provincial
Government

Local
Authority

Individual

**Shared
Responsibility**

Provincial Environmental Emergency Management Structure

Pillar 1: Prevention / Mitigation

Roles and responsibilities:

- Actions taken to prevent or reduce consequences of an issue or emergency. Mitigation activities aim at identifying and anticipating possible issues and emergencies. It consists of identifying the vulnerabilities and in taking proactive measures to mitigate the situation.

Pillar 2: Preparedness

Roles and responsibilities:

- Actions taken to prepare for effective issue or emergency response. Preparedness activities consist of all hazard planning for response and recovery during emergencies as well as training and exercising of the plans.

Pillar 3: Response

Roles and responsibilities:

- Actions taken to deal with the consequences of an issue or emergency. The response activities are put forward to take control and contain negative impacts. The response will require a complex level of coordination of operations and communications depending on the nature of the emergency. Response consists of activities designed to address the short-term effects of an emergency. Response includes agency response, resource coordination, organizational structure, protection and warning systems and communications.

Crisis Response Roles & Responsibilities

First Nations Health Authority	First Nation Community
Internal: **Coordination of the FNHA response** External: **Linkage and collaboration with external services and partners**	**As needed, activate community Emergency Response Plan and notify FNHA**
Provide or coordinate short-term service support to stabilize community	**Identify the needs and key points of contact** Example: • **Political representative (Chief)** • **Technical representative (Health Director)**
Provide short-term fiscal resources to support	**Apply resources in an efficient and effective manner**
Provide or coordinate support for long-term planning	**Participate in Response Evaluation and Formal Debrief** (Lessons Learned)
Provide equitable Crisis Response services across the province	**Ensure effective and efficient usage of Crisis Response resources**

FNHA Response Capacity

Health Services	Coordination
• Environmental Public Health services • Nursing services • Chief Medical Health Office • Health Promotion and Disease & Injury Prevention • Health Protection	• Regional Team • Communications • Policy and Planning

Incoming FNHA positions:

- **Manager**, Health Emergency Management

- **(5) Advisors**, Regional Mental Health

FNHA Crisis Response Protocols

- Crisis response is not only about response but also about prevention, preparedness, and recovery

- Response protocols are under development for both environmental and mental wellness incidents

- Components of our protocols
  - Assessment, Planning and Protocol Implementation
  - Communication and Public Relations (political considerations)
  - Crisis Support and Service Intervention (partner inclusive)
  - Environmental Interventions and Crisis Stabilization
  - Monitoring and Evaluation

Pillar 4: Recovery

Steps and measures taken after the emergency to repair and restore conditions to an acceptable level that existed prior to the emergency. Recovery measures commence during response. Recovery also reduces the future vulnerabilities of the community and improves planning for future events.

Roles and Responsibilities

FNHA

- Environmental Health, Health Protection, Nursing Services, Regional Offices

Communities (technical, political)

- Emergency Coordinators and Responders, Infrastructure & Operations staff, Health Directors and Health Representatives, Leadership
- Individual community members

Partners

- Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (AANDC)
- Emergency Management BC (EMBC) previously known as PEP
- Emergency Social Services (ESS)
- Local Municipalities and Regional Districts
- First Responders – local police/RCMP, fire services, emergency ambulatory care
- Wildfire Management Branch
- First Nations Emergency Social Services (FNESS)

FNHA Learnings

- We are a component of a complex system that we have endeavoured to improve

- The establishment of senior level medical health staff has been important from a service deployment perspective

- The establishment of regional directors has been important from a coordination between FNHA, partners and community

- We are creating tools and internal mechanism to operationalize our commitment to improved crisis response

- We are establishing formal partnership with service providers (RHA teams and FNESS)

- We are considering First Nations community best practices in order to learn approaches fitting at a community level

FNHA Crisis Response

- Our focus is wellness and health promotion, but events occur that are out of anyone's control

- We are learning and becoming better equipped to respond – short-term and long-term to unfortunate events

Questions and Discussion

Regional Caucus

- What is the role of Chiefs in relation to crisis response? (Mental & Environmental)

- What is the role of Health Directors in relations to crisis response? (Mental & Environmental)

- What is the role of the FNHC?

- What is the role of the FNHA?

- How do we engage our partners in times of crisis?

- What should be our focus from now to Gathering Wisdom VII?

- What are we missing from this process that should be considered?