

# IOWA SOCIETY FOR HOSPITAL PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY MANAGERS

March 26



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Iowa Society for Hospital Preparedness and Emergency Managers Conference provides education about:

- Emergency management planning
- Reunification
- Leadership and influence

Participants will also have the opportunity to network with colleagues.

## PROGRAM AGENDA

**8:30 a.m.**      **Registration and breakfast**

**9 a.m.**          **Welcome**

**9:15 a.m.**      **Statewide Emergency Management Readiness: Priorities, Progress and the Path Forward**

*Natalie Webster, Preparedness Program Manager, Iowa Health and Human Services, Bureau of Emergency Preparedness and Response*

This session will highlight how the Hospital Preparedness and Public Health Preparedness programs are key mechanisms for connecting hospitals and local emergency management to build a coordinated preparedness system. Participants will examine how these programs support local and regional response capabilities, identify opportunities to strengthen alignment and collaboration, and explore strategies to address gaps. The session will also discuss the directions of the preparedness programs and what they mean for sustaining effective partnerships that support state and local response goals.

Learning objectives:

- Describe the structure, purpose and key goals of the preparedness programs' grants and their roles in supporting partnership-based preparedness
- Discuss the direction of the preparedness programs and the implications for hospital and emergency management partnerships in achieving state response goals
- Explain how the preparedness programs connect hospitals and local emergency management to strengthen local and regional preparedness efforts, including opportunities to improve coordination and alignment
- Identify gaps in collaborative preparedness efforts and evaluate strategies to address them

**10:15 a.m.**      **Break**

**10:30 a.m.**      **Developing and Sustaining an Evidence-Based Hazmat Program for Your Facility**

*Steve Hergenreter, Chief, Fort Dodge Fire Rescue, Fort Dodge*

This session equips participants with the essential components of an evidence-based Hazmat program for health care facilities. Attendees will review Occupational Safety and Health Administration training and equipment requirements, learn the distinction between patient exposure and contamination, and explore the latest research-supported hybrid decontamination methods. Using multiyear incident data from Iowa, the session highlights the most common Hazmat events to help facilities focus preparedness efforts and strengthen response readiness.

Learning objectives:

- Evidence-based hybrid patient decontamination methods
- OSHA requirements for training and equipment
- Patient exposure versus patient contamination
- Preparing for the common incident types that occur in Iowa. Data collected over the years helps focus on the risks we face.

**11:30 a.m. Lunch break with districts**

**12:30 p.m. Business meeting**

**12:45 p.m. Family Reunification in Hospitals After a Crisis: Strategies for Coordination, Communication and Compassion**

*August "Dutch" Geisinger, Deputy Director, and Laura Kacer, Resiliency Coordinator, Polk County Emergency Management, Des Moines*

After a crisis, hospitals become hubs for information, care delivery and family support. Effective family reunification requires seamless coordination among hospital teams, emergency management partners and community agencies. This session will explore practical, scalable approaches for managing reunification operations in high-stress environments. Attendees will learn how to prepare staff, structure communication workflows, and implement reunification processes that prioritize accuracy, privacy, safety, and the emotional needs of patients and families.

Learning objectives:

- Apply practical strategies for managing high-volume family inquiries, reducing misinformation and supporting the emotional well-being of affected families
- Describe the roles of hospital personnel and emergency management partners during reunification operations and how to integrate them into emergency plans
- Identify key components of an effective hospital family reunification plan, including communication protocols, documentation processes and partner coordination
- Recognize challenges experienced during reunification efforts and outline mitigation strategies to improve readiness

**1:45 p.m. Break**

**2 p.m. Roundtable discussion**

**2:30 p.m. CEO Leadership Lessons**

*Conrad Hawley, Motivational Speaker, Spirit Lake*

Hawley teaches leadership as a daily way of life built on discipline, consistency and authentic service. Drawing from his CEO Leadership Lessons, he shows how to win the day through small, intentional habits. Hawley's message emphasizes that true leaders listen, celebrate others relentlessly and understand that leadership is legacy – it's about who you become and the impact you leave behind. Through powerful stories, practical frameworks and the philosophy of servitude, he equips people at every level to lead with humility, courage and unwavering authenticity.

Learning objectives:

- Build stronger, more effective teams
- Develop leadership through practical, real-world experience
- Develop personal accountability and foster individual growth
- Enhance mental toughness and well-being
- Strengthen leadership skills

**3:30 p.m. Adjourn**

## **SPEAKERS**

**August "Dutch" Geisinger** has been the deputy director of the Polk County Emergency Management team since August 2020. Geisinger has an extensive background in critical infrastructure protection, business continuity planning, training, public outreach and education. He served for 12 years with the U.S. Army and the Iowa Army National Guard before joining the Cedar Falls Police Department, where he was a patrolman, investigator, tactical team leader and patrol lieutenant. In 2003, Geisinger was named the Homeland Security Program Manager with the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division. Here, he helped emergency response agencies in several areas, including incident command and threat response. In 2009, he became a protective security adviser for the U. S. Department of Homeland Security, where he identified and protected critical infrastructure within the South Dakota District. In 2015, Geisinger returned to Iowa to become the executive director of the Safeguard Iowa Partnership, a public-private partnership whose mission is to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters through collaboration between public sector agencies and private businesses. Here, he helped set up workshops to train companies to develop business continuity and emergency plans, and conduct comprehensive threat and hazard analyses to make them more resilient during disasters.

**Conrad Hawley** is a former dual-sport Power Five athlete whose journey from a self-focused quarterback to a selfless, team-driven basketball player reshaped his life and purpose. After moving to Colorado and working 65-hour weeks to rebuild his identity, Hawley discovered the power of discipline, humility and servant leadership – principles that now define his message. Today, he's a national motivational speaker who has inspired Power Five football programs, Fortune 500 companies, annual business conferences, schools, first responders and entire communities. Hawley's presentations blend raw personal experience with practical frameworks that teach people to lead with purpose, elevate their habits and become the strongest versions of themselves for their teams, families and futures. Audiences consistently describe his message as energizing, authentic and profoundly transformative.

**Steve Hergenreter** has been active in emergency response since March 1989. Hergenreter was certified as a hazardous materials technician in 1993 and appointed to the Fort Dodge Fire Rescue Hazmat Team. Fort Dodge Fire Rescue contracts with nine counties in north central Iowa as a regional response team. This area has a heavy chemical production profile based on manufacturing and agriculture. It also includes the main rail lines of the Union Pacific, Canadian National and BNSF railroads, along with Interstate 35. He's been a hazmat technician responder, hazmat team coordinator and shift hazmat team leader. For the past 24 years, Hergenreter has also worked as a hazmat trainer for Occupational Safety Solutions and the International Association of Fire Fighters, delivering training in over 40 states to thousands of first responders and first receivers.

**Laura Kacer** joined the Polk County Emergency Management Agency in 2023 as the resiliency coordinator. Before this, Kacer worked for the Johnston Community School District, where she was superintendent, executive director of human resources and middle school principal. Before this, Kacer was a middle school principal and held other leadership roles with the Des Moines Public School District. In each of these capacities, she was instrumental in developing emergency operations plans, focusing on the safety, security, and well-being of staff and students. Kacer helped lead the district through the COVID-19 pandemic and developed and implemented responsive, dynamic return-to-learn plans. She received her specialist degree in educational administration from Drake University in 2014, her master's degree in educational leadership from Drake University in 1998 and a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Grand View University in 1995. Kacer is a member of the West Des Moines Rotary Club and was appointed by Gov. Kim Reynolds in 2023 as the Compact Commissioner for the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission.

**Natalie Webster**

## REGISTRATION

Register online at [www.ihaonline.org](http://www.ihaonline.org).

- ISHPM or IHA hospital members – \$50
- IHA associate members – \$175
- Non-IHA members – \$350



## PROGRAM INFORMATION

### In-person

IHA Conference Center, 100 E. Grand Ave., Suite 100, Des Moines.

- This is a paperless conference. IHA will email conference materials when available.
- If you have dietary restrictions or allergies, email [iharegistration@ihaonline.org](mailto:iharegistration@ihaonline.org).
- Dress for the conference is business casual. Layered clothing is recommended for your comfort.
- This event is being offered only in-person. Please register before seats fill.

### Virtual

This program also will be available through Zoom. Auto-generated captions (live transcription) will be available for virtual attendees.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

IHA will provide a certificate of attendance on completion of the program evaluation and strongly encourages nurses to keep a program brochure as documentation of their participation. Nurses decide whether course content meets the Iowa Board of Nursing's criteria for appropriate continuing education.

## LODGING

IHA offers a discounted corporate rate can use for overnight accommodation. The discounted rate is offered to IHA event attendees on “non-last room” availability, meaning this rate may not be available because of high demand. Book early if you think you may need arrangements. When calling, please reference the corporate ID:

### [Staybridge Suites Des Moines](#)

Corporate rate: \$139/night plus taxes

515-280-3828

Corporate ID No.: IXNRB

### [Downtown Des Moines AC Marriott](#)

Corporate rate: \$177/night plus taxes

515-518-6060

Corporate ID Code: 3QR

## CANCELLATION/REFUND POLICY

- Cancellations and substitutions are welcome anytime. Email cancellations and substitution requests to [iharegistration@ihaonline.org](mailto:iharegistration@ihaonline.org).
- IHA will refund cancellations received 10 or more business days before the conference.
- IHA will charge a \$50 administrative fee for cancellations received six to nine business days before the conference.
- IHA will calculate refunds by the date received and the number of IHA business days remaining before the conference.
- IHA will not refund cancellations received five or fewer business days before the conference.
- IHA may cancel the conference because of low enrollment. If so, IHA will notify preregistered participants and provide full refunds.

## ADA POLICY

IHA does not discriminate in its educational programs based on race, religion, color, sex or disability. IHA wishes not to exclude, deny services, segregate or treat anyone with a disability differently because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services. If you need auxiliary aids or services found in the Americans With Disabilities Act to attend this conference, call IHA at 515-288-1955 or write to the IHA Education Department.