

PACIFIC ADA CENTER

**WEBINAR SERIES: "EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND
PREPAREDNESS: INCLUDING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES"**

**"EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF AND
HARD OF HEARING IN EMERGENCIES."**

Thursday, October 9, 2014

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>> **Lewis Kraus:** Good afternoon and good morning depending on where you are in the country.

Welcome to the "Emergency Management and Preparedness: Including People with Disabilities" webinar series. I'm Lewis Kraus from the Pacific ADA Center, your moderator for this series.

This series of webinars is brought to you by the Pacific ADA Center as a collaborative effort between the ADA National Network and FEMA's Office of Disability Integration and Coordination. The ADA National Network is made up of 10 regional centers federally funded to provide training, technical assistance and other information as needed on the Americans with Disabilities Act. You can reach your regional ADA Center by dialing 1-800-949-4232.

We are very excited to have FEMA's Office of Disability Integration and Coordination as a partner in these webinars. The series will share issues and promising practices in emergency management inclusive of people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. Today's is the first webinar of the series. The webinars will provide an opportunity for emergency managers, people with disabilities, and others with access and functional needs, first responders, planners, community organizations, and other community partners to exchange knowledge and information and promising practices in exclusive emergency preparedness for the community. The topic will cover response as well as accessibility and reasonable accommodation issues under the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or the ADA, and other relevant laws.

The series will alternate monthly between ADA Network Learning series -- sessions, I'm sorry, sessions, and FEMA promising practices. We encourage you to review the series' website and familiarize yourself with the full array of sessions available in this series at

www.adapresentations.org/schedule.php. And that is in the main room, in the main chatroom, the address.

The monthly webinars will occur on the second Thursday of the month at this time, 2:30 eastern, 11:30 Pacific. And by being here you are on the list to receive notices for future webinars in this series. Those notices will go out two to three weeks before each webinar and they will open the webinar to the registrations. So the registrations will occur at the point where you receive these e-mails.

Ok. For those of you who are new to this webinar series and its software, I'm now going to review some of the features of the webinar platform before we begin today's session.

You can adjust the sound by sliding the sound bar left or right in the audio and video panel. If you are having sound quality problems, go through the audio wizard, which is accessed by selecting the microphone icon on the audio and video panel.

If you don't have sound capabilities on your computer and prefer to listen by phone, dial 1-805-309-2350 with the pass code 5552153. And note that this is not a toll-free number.

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You may type and submit questions in the chat area text box or press Control M and enter text in the chat area. If you're listening by phone and not logged into the webinar, you may ask your questions by e-mailing them to adatech@adapacific.org.

I want to remind everybody that the webinar's recorded and can be accessed on the ADA presentation's website at adapresentations.org/archives.php. And that should happen within 72 hours after the conclusion of the session.

Blackboard Collaborator allows you to change the sizes of your windows. We call this the white board or where the presentation slides are shown. There's a dropdown menu at the top which will allow you to change the size of the white board if you would like. The default is fit page. You can reposition or resize all of the windows, the chat, the participate and the audio/video panels by detaching them and using your mouse to reposition or stretch or shrink them. You can also use the little icon with the lines in the upper right corner of each panel to detach.

There are audio, audible and visual notifications of when things are happening on the website, like when people are entering and exiting. That may be bothersome, so you can turn that off by selecting the edit in your tool bar at the top of your screen. From the dropdown menu, select preferences. Scroll down to general and you can select audible notifications and uncheck anything you don't want to receive. Hit apply. And also you can select visual notifications and uncheck anything you don't want to receive and hit apply.

For those of you who are screen reader users, you can set your preferences through the setting options using the activity window, control and slash opens the activity window.

If you're experiencing any technical difficulties during the webinar, send a private chat message to me or to the Pacific ADA Center host by double-clicking in that name in the participant window. A tab will appear in your chat panel. Type your comment in that text box and hit enter. The

keyboard equivalent is F6. Then arrow up and down to locate Pacific ADA Center and select to send a message. Or you can e-mail adatech@adapacific.org or call us at 510-285-5600.

All right. Today's speaker is Candice Alder. And today's talk is entitled "Effective Communications with People who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Emergencies." In an emergency, communication is crucial to the safety of all citizens. What happens to persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or Deaf Blind during an emergency? This session is going to explore how the effective communications provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act apply in emergency situations. What happens when interpreters aren't available? What technologies are important to incorporate during the notification, sheltering, evacuation and recovery stages? Implementation and culturally affirmative communication strategies will also be covered.

And our presenter is Candice Alder. Candice is an outreach consultant for the Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing where she offers best practice solutions and compliance strategy that provide greater access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. In addition to providing training seminars on the ADA, Candice has worked in conjunction with several state, county, and city government agencies on providing greater communication access through outreach, consultation and technical assistance efforts. She's also provided trainings to Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities on their rights while educating businesses and government agencies on their responsibilities under the ADA since 2002 as an ADA expert and trainer. She has interned at the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind.

And now I'd like to introduce Candice Alder. Candice, take it from here.

>> **Candice Alder:** Great. Thank you, Lewis. Hello, everyone, and welcome to today's webinar. I'm really excited to be a part of the first of the series in which we talk about how we communicate effectively with one another and in particular in emergency situations.

Now, as Lewis mentioned, I am currently now with the Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. And what -- we are a state agency. And what we do is we recognize that our citizens in Colorado need the basic human right to communication. So through the commission, through the division of boards and commissions with the Colorado Department of Human Services, we promote effective communication access for all by, one, providing free telecommunication equipment to persons who are eligible, who are deaf or hard of hearing, such as providing video phone equipment, caption telephone equipment, iPad equipment, depending on the individual's needs.

We also provide education and training on communication access. And we also try to educate the public about Deaf culture and linguistic awareness.

We also provide information and referral to businesses and state agencies and any organization, really, that works with persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and also Deaf Blind.

We also -- we have a program called the Legal Auxiliary Services. We provide interpreters for legal proceedings in our State Court. And we also provide funding to address communication access needs within the State of Colorado.

So, with that, we've been asked to come in and talk about emergency management and

what emergency managers should be thinking about when it comes to the populations of persons who are deaf or persons who are hard of hearing or persons who are Deaf Blind.

When we were asked to do this, I decided to go ahead and take on this project because I had a personal story to tell. So I'm going to go to the next slide, and it says "When Disaster Strikes." And in this slide there is a picture, kind of blurry, but you can see kind of in the horizon a big plume of black smoke. And also you can see some flames in the horizon. It's a little bit dark.

The reason why this photo is pretty lousy is because, well, I took this photo and I'm not a very good photographer. I also took this photo while I was in quite a heightened state of panic trying to pack my house. So let me tell a little bit of the story.

While I was training, I was actually in North Dakota. I finished the training and went to the airport. And as I sat at the airport, my phone started ringing and ringing and ringing. And I was receiving several text messages. And in those text messages I was getting questions like, "Are you ok?" "Is everything all right?" "Are you doing ok?", "Do you need anything?" I'm staring at my phone and looking at these questions and wondering to myself: What are these people talking about? I'm at the airport in North Dakota. I'm fine. Why are they asking me all of these questions?

What I didn't know is that my neighborhood was on fire. I didn't realize that this was going on until my friend started texting me this information. I had no ideas as to how close it was to my home or what it was going to be like once I flew in to Denver International Airport and got down to Colorado Springs or Black Forest, Colorado.

So -- of course I tried to get information as best I could while I was still at the airport, but I

had no access to communication. So then when I finally get into Colorado Springs and I drive to Black Forest, I'm seeing a big plume of smoke coming from my neighborhood. I get to my place and I am trying to pack frantically to get everything I need.

Now, Colorado Springs is no stranger to fires. The year prior we had the Waldo Canyon fire. And you would think that being a person who had lived in Colorado Springs and had seen the Waldo Canyon fire that maybe I would have prepared myself a little bit better. But I hadn't. And as a result of that, there's a lot of stress that goes into not being prepared when a disaster strikes.

Now, think for a moment of all the things you would take if you were in a disaster situation and you only had a few minutes to get out. Well, it's hard to really narrow down what it is you would actually take without being prepared. And that was the case for me. It was hard to narrow things down.

Another thing, though, that I didn't think about and that I wasn't cognizant of at the time was that I also needed to think about my hearing and how does my hearing and my being hard of hearing, how is that going to affect this situation? How is that going to affect my need to evacuate? How is that going to affect my need to be notified and be updated? Those are things I did not think about. And now I have.

I'm going to go ahead and go to the next slide here. I want to demonstrate -- now, this is -- the next photo in this slide, this photo is of a very, very large fire plume. It is burning a bunch of trees in the background. And then there are two police officers that are just in front of the barrier to the fire.

Now, this is a news photo that I have in this presentation. The photo before was actually my

photo that I took from my front porch. In this photo, from my front porch this is about a mile away from my home. So I wanted to demonstrate that you just never know if something's going to happen. I never thought that an actual fire was going to affect me. And, again, like I mentioned, I wasn't prepared.

Now, to kind of alleviate or relieve some folks, the winds actually shifted and the fire did not actually come to my home and so my home was fine and everything was fine and I did not lose my home in this fire. I did evacuate and I was not in my home for about a week. And I did not take everything that I needed to take. So I'm hoping that by using this experience and by telling all of the other communities out there about what people who are deaf and hard of hearing might need to be taking with them, that we can all educate our local communities and get our local communities onboard with being better prepared in the case of an emergency but also to get shelters more prepared to house persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or Deaf Blind.

Another thing I want to mention -- and I'm going to go to the very next slide here -- and that is -- this is a photo, in the next slide, of a car that's submerged in water. There's a person sitting on the window ledge of this car and they're holding up a cell phone to their ear and they're in water. So the car is stuck in the water and the person is sitting on the window ledge. Just up the road -- so this car is in the road and so is the water. Up the road is a police officer that is trying to keep people from driving into this water.

I put this photo also in my PowerPoint presentation because this is actually just down the road. I'm going to go back to the previous slide for a minute. This is just down the road from where

you see this smoke plume. So once the Black Forest fire happened, like a month later there was a horrible rain storm. I happened to bring this up because I was actually in front of this gentleman that you see in this picture. I had no idea that there was a flash flood warning because I received absolutely no notification that was accessible to me. I did not receive a text or any type of notification. I was on the same road as this person. Luckily I drove up on to the actual berm, the property, when I saw the water rushing toward me but the person behind me in this picture did not, and so then they ended up being submerged in water and their car ended up becoming a total loss. It was a very dangerous situation.

This is an example of when notifications failed but also when you have a hearing loss involved with the failure of notification, I think people who are deaf and hard of hearing can become more susceptible to these types of situations.

When it was actually raining, which in this picture it's a lot more clear but when it was actually raining, you couldn't see a few feet in front of you so you had no idea that you were about to drive into this big thing of water. So that flash flood also carried away -- you can't see it in this photo, but it carried away a lot of other cars for people who just weren't prepared and didn't know that that was coming.

So we have these notifications systems such as reverse 911 or the robo calls that send out to local areas when an emergency actually happens. It's important to keep in mind that when 911 calls, when you have these reverse calls, they don't always work for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

One example I can give is suppose that you have a reverse 911 robo call and that reverse

911 robo call calls a person who uses a video phone who is deaf. A video phone is a phone with a camera that the person is able to sign to an interpreter and the interpreter can then relay a message to a person who can hear. This technology really opens the door for persons who use sign language to be able to call on a telephone.

Now, when the reverse call happens, these reverse calls will call a phone number, and a video phone number looks just like any other phone line number and what ends up happening is while the service is trying to find an interpreter, the robo call is already sending out the message, it also saying the message. So by the time the interpreter gets on the line, the message is already completed or halfway completed. So the people who are deaf and using video phones, they don't always get the full message. So that's one example of where that's not always effective if you're deaf or hard of hearing if you're using a video phone technology.

All right, when a person is using a caption telephone or a video phone, you are relying on internet access in a lot of those situations. Sometimes with caption phones you can get it through a landline, but with video phones you do rely on internet access. One of the problems during the Black Forest fire was internet and cell phone service became very, very slow and that's because of all the communications that were going on in and around our area. So we may not always get those notifications or be able to utilize our communication technology because of this fact.

Also, in general, sometimes reverse 911 or registries or anything like that does not always work. I surveyed -- after the Waldo Canyon fire happened down in Colorado Springs, we surveyed and asked a lot of the Deaf community if they knew about where they could go to register to receive text

messages during emergencies. And the majority of them did not know that this information existed. They did not know that the service existed. And many of them, when they did try to sign up for the service online had difficulty signing up for it because the process was not an intuitive process. There were a lot of words on the screen. And it was difficult to register. So keep in mind that registries, I can't always rely on them either, especially when you're working with the Deaf or Hard of Hearing population because we may not register because we may not think that our technology that we're using will be compatible with your registry.

The National Weather Service -- I just recently moved to Denver to take on my new position with the Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and I was at a meeting just a few blocks from my office when we got a tornado warning and we all had to go into the stairwell and wait for a while, wait for the storm to clear. While we were in the stairwell waiting for the storm to clear, several of us, about seven or eight of us that were there, and several of us received a message on our phone from the National Weather Service saying that there was a tornado in the area. We got that information. It was really useful information. But we also noticed that there were several people and persons that did not receive that information. So depending on your carrier, what kind of carrier you have, depending on your data plan that you have, depending on what kind of services you're using or utilizing and where you've registered will all depend on whether you get notified.

So I think in a lot of ways -- I give you this information because it's important to start educating your communities about where to register, what notifications mean, because until I really did extensive research, I had no idea that the tornado warning was from the National Weather Service. I thought maybe it was from the county or from my local government. I did not realize it was from the

National Weather Service. So educating the public about these different registries and what they all mean and how we can use redundancy to stay safe is a really great approach when we're talking about communication.

I'm going to go on to the next slide and talk about TV notifications. Now, before I start on the TV notifications, I want everyone to go up to the top of their screen. Up where it says -- just below the tool bar where it says audio/video, there's a little TV-looking icon with the CC. I'd like you to go ahead and even if you don't need it at the moment, go ahead and click on that little icon because I want you to watch the captioning for a moment and watch how the captionist is, verbatim, typing out and transcribing what I am saying during this presentation.

Now, during an emergency, persons who are hard of hearing, who do not use sign language, are going to rely very heavily on this captioning. I certainly was relying on it during the Black Forest fire. And one of the issues that often comes up -- I now want you to remove your window and look at, instead -- unless you need the window for communication; then leave it up. But I want you then to look at the slide. And the slide says "TV Notifications." And it says most news stations will have a scroll and should be captioned but -- and then there's a photo of Nancy Reagan. And below that photo of Nancy Reagan is closed captions. And on the closed captions it says, "a former fertile lady back at home, Nancy Reagan was." And then that's the end of the text.

Now, I believe that the captions meant to say a former First Lady back at home, Nancy Reagan was. But, of course, the captions made a pretty big mistake. This is what I'm demonstrating here, a result of what's called using digital captioning. The digital captioning is this automatic captions

that uses voice recognition software to then caption TV programs, YouTube videos, etc. And it is not a very accurate way of providing captions. In fact, it is very confusing at times when you're utilizing this technology. If you ever are providing videos on your websites and you think that because you've posted them to YouTube and YouTube has the automatic captions that you're compliant, I really encourage you to watch those videos with the closed captions on and realize how many mistakes this technology actually makes.

And so in my case, when I was in the fire, I was trying to get a lot of my information through the television. So I had the captions on, and as I'm watching these captions -- first of all, the FCC has made new rules on this which now prohibit this, but at the time the captions were actually over the scroll. So the scroll itself with the actual useful information was being covered by these digital captions that were just nonsense. I couldn't understand anything that these captions were saying. So I called the news station. I told them that I couldn't understand. They also didn't have a sign language interpreter on television with them at the time. I told them that I really would like it if they had somebody there who was live, just like the person who's here captioning our webinar, to be there to fix any mistakes that might come up in the emergency situation. Because any errors in communication could lead the person to the wrong place or give them the wrong information and confuse somebody.

So I use this photo to illustrate -- and because it's funny -- but to illustrate what happens when digital captions are provided and to also mention that we should be providing sign language interpreters on television.

Now, Colorado Springs' news stations did provide sign language interpreters for Black

Forest after about a day of the fire. They started providing sign language interpreters on the news and on the news stations and that really provided much more total communication for persons who are deaf and hard of hearing within these TV notifications. I thought that that was a very good best practice approach to keeping the communities informed.

Now, in the situation with the Black Forest fire, I did not have enough time to really be fighting with the captions on TV, so I actually took to social media and that's where I got a lot of my information about when I needed to evacuate and when I needed to be out of my house.

Ok. I'm going to the next slide. I'm going to talk about what we should be mentioning to our communities who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing or Deaf Blind about things they should think about bringing along with them. And here are some suggestions.

First is extra hearing aid batteries. Now, sheltering and shelters should already have on hand hearing aid batteries just in case somebody needs them but we can't always rely that these places are going to get all of these supplies or that they're going to have them where we end up. So it's important then to encourage our communities to be stocking up on these items as well.

Another thing that's really important is to have telephone and equipment chargers, especially the chargers because I think that's the last thing we think about during an emergency.

A pen and paper to be able to communicate very short amounts of communication between a person who is deaf and a person who can hear.

And a tablet or a laptop computer. This can serve multiple functions. The tablet or laptop

can provide video phone technology; it can provide technology to write notes back and forth; can provide TTY or relay technology. So having that kind of equipment is really vital.

If a person who is deaf or hard of hearing or Deaf Blind uses a service animal, remind them to put extra food for their service animal into their kit.

Another thing to keep in mind is any kind of pertinent medical documents, a Smartphone. And a Smartphone has so much really great technology on it these days. There's captioning on telephones, so now I can use my cell phone and read captions simultaneously much like what we're seeing in this webinar.

And I'm asked -- some people are really surprised by this one, but one person had told me about how if they do have to go to a shelter and you're deaf or your hard of hearing, you are very susceptible to any kind of visual noise. So if you're trying to sleep and there's a mass shelter situation, you're going to have a very difficult time with all the visual information. So bringing an eye mask is a very good thing.

Also, some people might be saying: Why ear plugs? Well, persons with residual hearing, any kind of hearing, may also have the same difficulties with overstimulation. Bringing ear plugs is a good way to alleviate some of that.

One of the things that we learned from Hurricane Katrina and from other major emergencies is that communication is very vital and the methods of using phone communication do not always work; using the internet might not work in an emergency situation. So we need to also let our communities know that if they're trapped inside of their home and they're unable to self-evacuate, in some

circumstances a person could be trapped in their home, that they need to find other methods or other ways to communicate information of their whereabouts.

So in this next slide I have a photograph from Hurricane Katrina. It's on a rooftop. And on the rooftop it says, "mother, sister, wife, 3 children, 8-12-14, a 9-month-old baby, no food, no water, please help."

So when I've done a lot of training for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, I've also suggested to them to know that they may have to communicate information, especially about the fact that they're deaf or hard of hearing and they may not hear an emergency person, personnel, coming to their door to provide them with information or to get them out or to evacuate them.

To illustrate this, the National Council on Disability, they put together a paper called "Effective Communications for People with Disabilities Before, During, and After Emergencies." Just on page 1 alone there's a letter of transmittal. It's written to President Barack Obama. Within it there's a part in it in which one person who was deaf talks about her account as a survivor -- I'm sorry, it was actually Hurricane Sandy, and talks about her surviving Hurricane Sandy. And she's quoted within this letter of transmittal. She says, "When police with megaphones rolled through Oakwood Beach neighborhood in the hours before the hurricane thrust ashore, she did not hear their announcement about evacuation help. In the days after the surge ripped through her home and took it off its foundation and filled it with water to a depth of five feet and tossed her shed nearly a block away. She joined the thousands of other dazed victims seeking some answers and a measure of comfort."

Now, she went to a particular shelter. "Now, for this woman who has been deaf since birth,

she went through the relief center. And for her it was like being in a silent movie. There were no signs in that area providing information for people who are deaf and directing them to translation services and she was left feeling more isolated than ever.”

I bring this up because when you have barriers to communication, isolation is one of the biggest factors. So when you're thinking about -- when you're in an emergency, you know, the last thing you want to do is feel isolated. You want to have support and you want to be able to get the help that you need.

Ok. I'm going to move on to the next slide and that's going to kind of tie in to the common communication barriers for people who are deaf and hard of hearing.

The first line I mention American Sign Language versus English. Now, American Sign Language, or ASL, is used by persons who are deaf as their mode of communication. Of course, not all people who are deaf use sign language, but persons that were born deaf or have deaf parents or became deaf at an early age are more likely to use American Sign Language than people that lost their hearing later on in life.

American Sign Language is not a universal language, meaning it's not a language used in all other countries. In fact, each country has their own language of sign language communication. And also, American Sign Language is not an English order, which means English proficiency can be a barrier to some individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. American Sign Language is more like French in grammatical structure.

So when you're writing long notes to a person who is deaf and uses sign language, when

you're doing any kind of lengthy information and it's in written format, there might be barriers to communication. If you're having them read rules or read a statement or sign a document, they may not know what it is that they're reading without providing a sign language interpreter. So any kind of lengthy conversation you're going to -- or any kind of really pertinent or important information you're going to want to provide a sign language interpreter to help bridge the gap between English and American Sign Language.

So keep in mind that any kind of form might pose a barrier to a person who is deaf or hard of hearing.

Also, if the websites provide information about whether it's evacuation or returning home or certain meetings, those websites need to be accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. So if you're providing video, making sure that they're captioned on the video. And anytime a lengthy amount of information, break it down into bullet points so that way the general public, as a form of universal access, can understand the information.

Also, another barrier to communication is when there are unqualified or no interpreters. Sometimes in some emergencies it may be difficult to get an interpreter. And I'm going to tell you a little bit about -- later on in this presentation -- about what kinds of technologies you might be able to utilize if that technology is available and also how to utilize contractual agreements with interpreting agencies to be able to then get good qualified interpreters.

The other part to be concerned about is when there's no access to technology. Maybe you have all the right equipment but there's no internet access or there's no phone lines or both. Those can

also pose a huge barrier to communications.

Another barrier that most persons who are deaf or hard of hearing or Deaf Blind face in the community is what we call an attitudinal barrier, where sometimes individuals don't understand the culture of people who are deaf or how to interact with people who are deaf and hard of hearing or even how to talk to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

What's interesting is that the Deaf community, they see certain terms such as hearing impaired or disability as negative terms. They much prefer to be called deaf because they don't find themselves to be disabled or impaired because they're actually very proud of their deafness. So while you're making plans and while you're including the Deaf community in your community planning, make sure that you're using the right affirmative language for persons who are deaf and hard of hearing. And the appropriate cultural affirmative language is persons who are deaf, persons who are hard of hearing, or persons who are Deaf Blind.

Ok. Now when it comes to interaction, these are the things we think should be taught to any volunteer or any person that's going to be interfaced with the public that might work with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing.

Another thing to keep in mind, your chances of working with somebody who is hard of hearing or deaf is very high, especially if you're working with the senior population. So if you notice that there's a gap in communication, one of the things you should do is first ask how the person prefers to communicate so ask the person what their communication preferences are. If you have a shelter and you had an intake form, that's a good thing to ask on an intake form is how do they prefer to be

communicated with. What kind of methods or technologies might they need or do they use on a daily basis to communicate?

Sometimes people do err on the assumption that a person who is deaf or hard of hearing can lip-read. Some individuals can lip-read very well and some individuals cannot. If a person is hard of hearing and has residual hearing, meaning they have some of their hearing left, they might be able to lip-read a little bit better than a person who is deaf.

This kind of depends on the individual, really. But they say that it's about 30% of what's said on the mouth can be easily understood. So there's a lot of miscommunication that can happen because of lip-reading. So don't always assume that people who are deaf or hard of hearing can lip-read.

Also, if you're in any kind of lighting situation, if the power goes out in your area or if the room is dark or if it's nighttime, keep in mind that lighting is very important when communicating.

When you're talking to a person that's deaf or hard of hearing, you don't have to alter your speech unless they tell you. You can speak at a normal pace. Keep it at a normal volume. And talk to them like you would talk to anyone else and they'll let you know if they need you to modify or adjust.

Another big complaint from Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities is when they go places with either a friend, a family member, or an interpreter, sometimes they get left out of the equation as the entity is then talking directly to the interpreter or directly to their companion. Keep in mind to address the person directly and be able to communicate with them by looking directly at them and remembering that the interpreter is not involved in the situation but only there to provide communication

access.

So we know that the ADA -- I'm on the next slide -- about the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA. It is civil rights that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities. And the main focus is on integration. I mention this because a lot of sheltering situations or evacuation situations tend to segregate people during emergencies. We saw this happen with the Waldo Canyon fire where individuals whom were not sick were being sent to hospitals because they had a disability. Sick people belong in hospitals, and people with disabilities belong in the same place as everyone else. So keep that in mind.

And remember that the ADA is only the minimum standard. So if you are able to access more technology, if you're able to access better equipment for persons who have disabilities, or people who are deaf or hard of hearing, it's actually going to help you as well in the long run. These modifications or adjustments actually help both parties.

And it's very important that the rights of people are taught to your volunteers. As part of the ADA, effective communication, public entity needs to make sure that the communications with hearing individuals are equally as effective as communications with others. This also includes participants in programs, companions, and members of the general public.

I'm going to take a moment to look over here at the chat area. Lewis has posted, "For those interested in the report that Candice referred to, it is a National Council on Disability report on effective communications in emergencies and it can be found at www.ncd.gov/publications/2014/05272014."

I'm moving on to the next slide, "Before Disaster." Now, there are a lot of community forums

and emergency planners do bring together a lot of community members to the table to discuss emergency planning and the inclusion of persons with disabilities. I cannot stress this enough that it's very important to include people, to be asking them questions about their local communities. There are definitely going to be certain barriers that your community faces that other communities may not face. And when you have -- if you're deaf or hard of hearing or if you have any other form of disability, there might be things that will affect that in your local community. So, again, make sure that you identify the needs of people who are deaf and hard of hearing and make advanced arrangements.

One of the things that's not on my slide is find out the local numbers within your community of people who are deaf or hard of hearing. That will actually help you decide what kinds of equipment and what kinds of things to be providing in your local communities. When you look at certain numbers, you're able to then decide, ok, I'm going to need to provide sign language interpreters because there are people who are deaf that use sign language in my community. I'm going to have to provide captioning because there are persons who are hard of hearing or there's a senior population in my community. Knowing this information will help you to make advanced decisions on what kind of access.

Now, when you're looking at sites for emergencies ahead of time, try to find sites that are accessible that have communication features that are accessible to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. This includes things such as fire alarms that are visual, signage, proper signage so that people can know where to go and be able to know what areas they're in, access to telephone equipment, etc. All of those things are very important when trying to find an accessible site.

At the end of this presentation I have provided a link to the 2010 standards and the '91 standards. You can find a lot of the communication elements and features in that particular handout.

This next one I'm going to really emphasize and that is contracting with local sign language interpreting agencies. It is so imperative that before a disaster strikes that you work with your local sign language interpreting communities to provide effective services to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in the event of an emergency. And by having a contractual agreement, it really saves time, very, very precious time, in getting those services implemented during an actual disaster.

As I mentioned, during the Black Forest fire it was about a day before I actually saw a sign language interpreter on television. I would have loved to have seen a sign language interpreter on television right away. So this is where having a contractual agreement and working with interpreting agencies and working with several interpreting agencies in case maybe one isn't available or maybe the interpreters of one particular agency have to evacuate themselves, having this policy and having that contractual agreement in place before the disaster will help you come up with a Plan A, a Plan B, and a Plan C for providing communication access. And within that contractual agreement you'll talk about what kind of services they'll provide, confidentiality agreements, and also talking about fees and response to particular emergencies, numbers that you can call in the event of an emergency.

The other thing to do before a disaster is to acquire any kind of medical equipment or devices. I like to stress on that one to make sure to get the right kinds of hearing aid batteries.

Ok. Now, the next slide says sheltering. As I mentioned earlier, persons who are deaf and hard of hearing or Deaf Blind do not belong in a hospital or a nursing home. You want to keep them

with their families, if possible. You want the hospital to be there to help persons who may be injured or sick or had some sort of accident within the disaster. You want the hospital staff to be able to serve those individuals and not people that aren't sick or people that don't need those kinds of services.

Another thing about sheltering that I mentioned is to provide policies, exploring communication options, and training your staff. Within your policy, talk about the types of equipment that you have and where it's stored or where it should be stored in the event of an emergency within that shelter. Give etiquette and communication training to your staff about talking to people who are deaf or hard of hearing, communication methods such as using interpreters or writing notes back and forth, and any kind of means that a person who is deaf or hard of hearing might need.

Now, as I mentioned earlier, contractual agreements with sign language interpreters is very important and it's important to bring on professionals to interpret during emergencies. When you're using somebody who's not a professional, you are opening the door for people who get the wrong communication. So it's important that we are hiring individuals that can interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially utilizing specialized vocabulary.

Now, whether or not they're certified is going to really depend on what's available and who is available in the event of an emergency. A certification is usually held through the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, a certified interpreter as a code of conduct that they have to adhere to hold up their certification.

And there is a lot more liability that an interpreter has when they are a certified interpreter. When they're using a non-certified interpreter who has not gone through all of the process to receive

their certification yet, you are running the risk of that interpreter possibly not being qualified and not being necessarily held accountable if they misinterpret information. So you'll want to be careful about whether you use a certified or non-certified interpreter.

Now, in general, we say that friends and family and minor children are off limits when it comes to sign language interpreters. But in the event of an emergency, if it's the only thing available, then that may be a good time to utilize a friend or a family member until you can get somebody who is qualified to be there as an interpreter. So really, you're utilizing that for the emergency situation itself until you can get an actual professional there.

I'm going to say that one more time. It's not that you use a friend or family member during an emergency for the entire time. It's that if one is not available and you have a friend or family member that's there to interpret, they might be able to do that but make sure that you're getting a professional there. This is only for in the event of an emergency. Otherwise you're running into the same risk that I mentioned earlier of the person not necessarily interpreting accurately. A family member may not be impartial to a situation, so a family member might think, oh, well, my mom's going to be really, really upset to hear that the house is gone so I'm going to leave that part out of the equation. And then she finds out later that the house is gone when the announcement was actually made at the meeting that a family member was interpreting. So keep in mind when you're using a professional, that person's impartial to the situation and they're going to be much more accurate in interpreting.

Some of the auxiliary aids and services that people who are deaf and hard of hearing -- I'm

on the next slide -- are using such as assistive listening devices and systems. And then -- I have this in the slide wrong but it's Communications Access Realtime Translation or CART as you're seeing in the closed captioning box here in this presentation. TTYs and video phones, open and closed captioning, relay services, captioned telephones, amplifiers that are compatible with hearing aids.

So I will go through some of these. So the next slide is a picture of an assistive listening device or a loop system. In this photo -- it's kind of an animated cartoon photo. There is an individual who has a microphone. And then there are people sitting in chairs in the audience. The person is speaking into the microphone. The sound is then sent through wave lengths out to either a receiver or to a person's hearing aid, and that hearing aid is -- so that sound that the person is saying through the microphone is going directly to that person's ear through the use of the hearing aid. That is called a loop system. So if a person has a T-Coil switch on their hearing aid, they're able to flip on that switch if the room has a loop system installed and they get that sound directly to their hearing aid which can be a very useful tool for individuals who are hard of hearing.

If you're having any kind of community forum such as you're explaining to your local communities that may have evacuated about when they can go back home, when they can recover their items, or any other pertinent information, you'll want to find a location for those announcements that do have these systems installed, a loop system installed. And also a room that provides amplification such as a microphone. So that way everybody's able to hear and understand the conversation.

In the next slide I have -- it says Communications Access Realtime Translation or CART.

And in the photograph there's a woman and she is typing on a little machine that's transcribing the information that's being said. In front of her, in a blurrier picture, you can see the words coming up on a computer screen of what she's transcribing. This also would be really great to provide during community forums as a way of universal access to any individuals who might need it. People who are seniors may not necessarily know that they need this kind of access but it might actually provide them with a lot of communication and support by having this information in front of them.

Ok. The next one that I want to mention is called video remote interpreting. In this slide and in this photo there are two individuals that are speaking to one another and are looking at each other face-to-face. And behind -- there's a gentleman and a woman. And behind the gentleman is a TV. And on the TV is a camera on top of the TV -- actually on the television is a sign language interpreter. And the woman who is sitting across from the man is staring at the sign language interpreter. There's a text that says "The video interpreter hears everything spoken in the room in real time."

Now, think about an emergency. You've contracted with a sign language interpreter. You have worked with several agencies and none of them can get on site. Maybe there's an issue of this is in a rural community and there is no access to the roads such as what happened in the floods here in Colorado last summer -- or two summers ago now. So interpreters can't actually access the area even if you did have a contractual agreement. If you had internet access, if this might be another viable option, to have a remote interpreter here on the screen to be able to interpret information to a person who is deaf using sign language.

This, of course, will not necessarily work if you don't have access to internet or to Wi-Fi communication.

Now, the next slide, a couple of my colleagues asked me -- when they looked through this presentation, they said, "Do we really have to include the TTY in this presentation because really, none of us use this technology anymore." And in this slide there's a picture of the old-fashioned TTY. It's got a bunch of keys that looks like a keyboard. There are two cups on top of the keyboard. These two cups, that's where you put the telephone receiver on top of. And this machine then transmits a signal to another TTY machine. And then you're able to use texting communications to talk to one another. I call this old-fashioned texting because this is kind of how you communicated, via text. You type in information and then you say go ahead and then you wait for the person to respond.

Now, as a minimum standard per the Americans with Disabilities Act, shelters should have, if they're providing telephone services, they should have a TTY on site for a person who is deaf or hard of hearing to utilize. And this, again, is a minimum standard.

Now, I also have just read a paper from the National Association of the Deaf or NAD in which they're encouraging people who are deaf or hard of hearing that if they still have a TTY to not necessarily throw it away but to actually put it in your emergency kit. The reason for this is because if you're in an area where maybe internet is down but a landline is still up, you now still have access to communication because this is utilizing landline technology. Shelters should also have this information along with any emergency call centers should have direct TTY lines. And they should be publicizing this information to the general public about what TTY lines they're using.

Now, a person who is deaf that uses sign language is also encouraged if they can think about it during a time of evacuation -- and this might be something good to put on their checklist of

things to grab if they're evacuating for an emergency -- is to grab their video phone equipment. This equipment is usually registered to that individual. If they grab their equipment, they will probably be able to utilize it if they go to a place that has internet connectivity.

And in this slide there are three photos. And this is demonstrating the relay service. So if I'm a deaf person, I use my video phone to call other deaf people and I can see them on the screen and we can communicate using sign language directly to one another. But suppose I want to call somebody who can hear. I actually push a button on my video phone and I'll have an interpreter come up on the screen and that interpreter will then call the hearing person and then the interpreter will act as a relay between the two callers or the two parties. That's called video relay technology, or VRS, Video Relay Service. And a video phone is really the most preferred method of persons who are deaf who use sign language.

Going to the next slide where it says captioned phone, there's a photo of a telephone that has a screen and has words that are scrolling on top of the screen. So the caption phone is great for persons who are hard of hearing, that have some of their hearing left, and they are able to talk on the phone and use their own voice. They call a service and that service will then caption the conversation that's being said to the individual simultaneously.

There's also some telephone apps that are available. I think this is a really great technology that's also evolving over time.

This should most definitely be in any shelter situation that provides telephone access which is called an amplified phone or a phone amplifier. I have a picture here of a device that I use. It just

turns up the volume. You can actually just hook it in to any handset receiver. So you don't have to buy a special phone unless you want to, but you just hook this into a handset receiver and it can make the volume go up even higher. So phone amplification can be so vital for people who are seniors or people who are hard of hearing to be able to access the telephone.

Also if you're in a shelter situation, providing a scroll or a large visual display. In this next slide there's a photo of the visual display. It's just this big banner that says "Large Visual Display." If you're communicating short information such as meeting at 5:00 or dinner at 6:00 or something along those lines, this is a good way to also communicate and use universal access. You might think that a person who's deaf or hard of hearing may have heard information, but they may have missed it due to their hearing. So you'll want to have other methods of providing information. If you want a low-tech option, you can also write signs or type out signs and print them out and post them up on a community board.

Ok. So as you can see, there's a lot of things to think about when you're working with persons who are deaf and hard of hearing and persons who are Deaf Blind as well. I have provided some resources that will help remind you as you're planning for emergencies within your local communities.

The first resource that I've provided is the Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Our website, www.ccdhh.org.

The next one is the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and their website is www.rid.org. Within this you can get -- within this website you can get the RID Code of Ethics. You can read the

Code of Ethics. There's also a standards practice paper on using video remote interpreting which I think is very interesting. And you can learn a little bit more about what qualified interpreters are within this website and how to get an interpreter.

There's also the National Association of the Deaf. I mentioned earlier that they talk about planning for emergencies and emergency preparedness for persons who are deaf and hard of hearing. They do have some resources on their site that you may want to refer people who are deaf and hard of hearing in your communities to. Their website is www.nad.org.

I'm going to go to the next slide.

There is the DOJ Shelter Checklist 2007. It's not an all-encompassing checklist, so you'll want to keep in mind of the 2010 standards while you're looking through this checklist. You can go to www.ada.gov/shleterck.htm.

There's also the DOD ADA Toolkit at ada.gov. That is on the U.S. Department of Justice website, www.ada.gov.

I'm going to go to the next slide and also mention that there is the National ADA Network. You can reach them at www.adata.org or you can ask them direct questions and get assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act.

And if you want to see other presentations like the one that we did today, you can go to adapresentations.org.

Also, always consult the FEMA website, which I don't have up here. And also consult the

American Red Cross, www.redcross.org.

If you want links to the 1991 standards, you can go to ada.gov and receive those resources.

Ok. What are some of your questions for me? You can ask questions about providing sign language interpreters or effective communication access or any kind of cultural questions you might have. I'd love to hear them.

>> **Lewis Kraus:** Ok, Candice. Thank you so much for that presentation. That was really excellent. I do want to tell people now is the time if you have not put your questions in to the chat window, please do that now.

While you are doing that, let me note for you that the session, all the session materials that are related to this webinar, will be archived and available next week at www.adapresentations.org/archive.php.

Ok. As people put questions in, let me go through and tell you a couple of things first. The story that Candice referred to about the woman in Hurricane Sandy was about Carol who is in our audience today. So she just wanted to let people know that she was actually listening to this. She did have a comment along one of the slides that says that -- she had a couple of comments. One was that "first responders were totally unprepared for this kind of disaster. And unfortunately I did not get appropriate help five weeks later. I am --" she was thankful for the NCD manual distributed last May. She also mentioned Red Cross and relief volunteers need to be trained to be prepared to deal with

others with disabilities. Most of them are not aware of communication methods, devices, interpreters, and resources. And she highly recommends these people be included in the training.

The next comment -- we had a few comments. From Lauren, I believe. "I suggest to provide a full-time personnel or volunteers in centers like weather centers or police centers who are ready to help people with disabilities. People usually panic and do not know what to do even when they are trained to such disasters."

And I think there are efforts where that happens. So that's great comments. Thank you.

One question for you, Candice. I believe this was referring to earlier on when you were talking about finding agencies to work with, to help some organizations or localities put together their information. She asks how do we find an agency.

>> **Candice Alder:** Great question. I mentioned earlier the RID website, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. I would suggest starting there. To look -- they actually do have lists of their certified interpreters on their website. Not all interpreters are actually going to disclose their certification on the website but there are a lot of interpreters that are registered on the website that you might be able to access information on them.

And ask your local Deaf communities. Talk to people who are deaf in your community and ask them about what interpreting agencies they know of that are good, that are effective, and that work. And ask them if there are any that they don't prefer to work with.

They're the ones that are really going to be the experts in where to find good interpreters within the community. So be sure to include people who are deaf in your planning process. And be willing to survey several Deaf groups or deaf individuals on their communication methods on which agencies they contract with.

>> **Lewis Kraus:** Ok. Let's go on to the next comment from Donna Platt. She has several, actually. She said you've hit a lot of issues that need to be addressed. Several concerns. People with hearing loss will have limited access while using communication technologies. Many shelters may not have internet access; some have limited electricity while on generator.

She also mentions that some states have ASL interpreters trained for disaster events. And she liked the idea of including the TTYs, that shelters should include TTYs, but she suggests that there -- we should include instructions on using that equipment because younger people -- younger generation people, she says, have never used it.

And finally, she mentioned "just recently that I noticed during the announcement people are asked to call 211 or 311 for resources. People with hearing loss who depend on relay services are not able to reach their local agencies because relay services are located all over this country. They will need 10-digit numbers to reach the agency near the caller, not the relay call center."

So I don't know if you want to add anything to that, Candice, or we can go on to the next comment.

>> **Candice Alder:** Those are great comments. I especially like the comment about training the staff on how to use the TTY because, absolutely right, not necessarily always going to know how to use that kind of technology. It's not technology that's even really highly used anymore by the Deaf or Hard of Hearing community. So I like that comment a lot.

We can go on to the next comment.

>> **Lewis Kraus:** Ok. Next question comes from Keenan. If you are in a work environment, what are examples of strategies that employers can use to support employees who are deaf, hard of hearing, or Deaf Blind in a disaster or emergency situation?

>> **Candice Alder:** That's a great question. One of the things is to have an emergency evacuation plan put into place for the workplace. A lot of employers do not have an emergency evacuation plan for their employees, and they don't necessarily plan for what's going to happen in the event of an emergency. If you have somebody that's a foreperson, make sure they're informed. If self-disclosed that information would be very important. And then also to find somebody as a backup. And then also do drills and plans for emergency evacuation within an employment setting or notification systems. Are there e-mails that could be sent out to employees? Are there text messages within telephones that could be sent out to employees?

Those things provide universal access so not just providing information to just people who can hear but also providing information to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

So coming up with notification systems, being able to inform forwardons on individuals that are designated to help out during an evacuation or a disaster and having all of that listed into your emergency evacuation plan within your facility. All of those things can really help with the employment situation.

>> **Lewis Kraus:** Ok. Great. Next question from Kathleen Donahue. Please clarify if it's the ADA legislation that sets the requirements for shelters when accommodating individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. Where can we find the requirements?

>> **Candice Alder:** Ok. Great. You can find the requirements within the Title II and Title III ADA standards. You can go to ada.gov for a lot of that information. You can get information on effective communication and the Americans with Disabilities Act within the DOJ website. So that's one resource.

I'm trying to remember. I had a resource on sheltering. Let me see if I can find it. I'm going to go back a slide I think.

>> **Lewis Kraus:** While you are looking, let me also remind people that if you have questions around the ADA, there are 10 regional centers in the ADA National Network and there's a toll-free number that you can call and ask this exact type of question and they will be able to answer it for you. The number

for that, again, is 1-800-949-4232.

>> **Candice Alder:** And I have in this slide up where it says "Resources." It says "DOJ Shelter Checklist 2007." I would start there because this is a document on the ADA from the U.S. Department of Justice. It is at www.ada.gov/shleterck.htm. So that will tell you some of the requirements for sheltering.

There's also the DOJ ADA Toolkit which is just below the shelter checklist. It actually has a chapter on sheltering. So if you go to that toolkit which is www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap7shelterprog.htm, if you go to that link, you will also see the DOJ ADA Toolkit.

>> **Lewis Kraus:** Ok. I think we're only going to have time for one more question although several of them came in. Let me ask you this one. This one comes from Leslie Kelly. How can I get my local EMA center to get funding for those of us using text cell phones calling for help?

>> **Candice Alder:** The local emergency managers, each county and each city are going to have their own policies and procedures for how they notify individuals. Make sure that you are talking to your local governments about your communication needs and be sure to ask them about this technology. Not every place has implemented this. Some places are going to be more advanced than others. The

texting is not necessarily a requirement per law, but it is a great way to notify individuals. So we'll have to just kind of wait and see if there's any legislation that might lead to that later on down the road.

>> **Lewis Kraus:** I do want to remind you also in terms of the resources, because someone else noted that each state will have a commission or an Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing to get information and resources. So just like Candice is here with Colorado's, there are others in each state. So you can look for -- if you're not finding resource that you were hoping to find, you can turn to your own state commission or Office on Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

All right. I realize and I can see the questions piled up. I'm very sorry we won't be able to get to all of them. This was quite a well-attended and very interested group. You can ask your question at your regional ADA Center, 800-949-4232 and they will be able to answer those questions as well.

Let me also mention to you that you'll receive an e-mail after this webinar is done with a link to an online session evaluation. Please do complete those evaluations for today's program. We really would like to have your input, improve the webinars as much as we can and demonstrate to our funder the broad reach of this.

We want to thank Candice today for sharing her time and knowledge with us. It was a very great session. Thank you so much, Candice.

A reminder to all of you that today's session was recorded and it will be available for viewing

next week at www.adapresentations.org/archive.php.

Next month we look forward to seeing you on November 13, the first of the FEMA promising practices. That will be on including emergency management in Independent Living Centers to maximize potential for the whole community preparedness.

Thank you so much for attending today's session. We hope you have a good rest of your day. And thank you so much. We'll talk to you in November.

Good day.