Emergency Preparedness Exercise Design and Evaluation: Session Four

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Empowering patients, families and caregivers to achieve health care quality improvement

Exercise Design Series Part 4: Exercise Evaluation and Improvement Planning

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Co-Owners Optima EP LLC and Emergency Preparedness Consultants

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Objectives for Session #4

- Define and discuss the importance of the "Hot Wash"
- Demonstrate tools to gather information from evaluators and participants to create the Executive Summary and Improvement Plan
- Explain what an After Action Report is and how to utilize emergency exercises for quality improvement
- Identify tools and tips to improve the process of evaluation and improvement planning

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Let's Review….

Once you have determined the capabilities you want to test, and have built SMART exercise objectives, create a scenario that will drive players to test those capabilities.

Remember emergency exercises can be simple games, drills, or seminars, or be table-top discussion-based, functional (do vs. discuss) or full-scale (lights and sirens).

Develop tools such as Exercise Evaluation Guides and practice using the communication tools you want your team to utilize in a **real** event.

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Exercise Evaluation Guides

[About - HSEEP Resources - Preparedness Toolkit (fema.gov)](about-hseep-resources)

Click on "Evaluation"

Evaluation Templates

Exercise evaluation is the cornerstone of an exercise and maintains the functional link between exercise and improvement planning. Through exercise evaluation, organizations assess the capabilities needed to accomplish a mission, function, or objective. Effective exercise evaluation involves planning for exercise evaluation, observing and collecting data during exercise conduct, analyzing data, and reporting exercise outcomes.

FEMA Core Capabilities: National Preparedness Goal

Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEG) - 📄 **See EEG Page**

📄 **Collecting Data Using EEGs**

📄 **Developing EEGs**

📄 **Blank EEG**

DEVELOPING EXERCISE EVALUATION GUIDES

Terminology

The Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs) are structured to capture information specifically related to the evaluation requirements developed by the Exercise Planning Team. The following evaluation requirements are documented in each EEG:

- **Capabilities**: The distinct critical elements necessary to achieve a specific mission area (e.g., prevention). To assess both capacity and gaps, each capability includes capability targets.

Activity ⟹
- **Capability target(s)**: The performance threshold(s) for each capability; they state the exact amount of capability that exercise players aim to achieve. Capability targets are typically written as quantitative or qualitative statements and are composed of three parts: a critical task, an impact, and a timeframe.

Tactics ⟹
- **Critical tasks**: The distinct elements required to perform a capability; they describe the specific actions needed to achieve the capability target. Critical tasks generally include the activities, resources, and responsibilities required to fulfill capability targets. Capability targets and critical tasks may derive from operational plans, policies, standard operating procedures, or discipline-specific standards.

Development Instructions

Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGS) provides evaluators with a standardized tool to guide data collection and capture performance results during an exercise. Since each organization, jurisdiction, or entity has unique targets and critical tasks, each organization develops EEGs specific to its plans, procedures, and protocols.

EEGs page: A place to start

Organized by the 5 phases of the Emergency Management Cycle

EEG's are designed to be modified or tweaked to meet your needs and plans

Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs)

EEGs are designed to accomplish several goals:

- Streamline data collection
- Enable thorough assessments of the participant organizations' capability targets
- Support development of the After-Action Report
- Provide a consistent process for assessing preparedness through exercises
- Help organizations map exercise results to exercise objectives, core capabilities, capability targets, and critical tasks for further analysis and assessment

Prevention Templates ›

Protection Templates ›

Mitigation Templates ⌄

- Community Resilience
- Long-term Vulnerability Reduction
- Operational Coordination
- Planning
- Public Information and Warning
- Risk and Disaster Resilience Assessment
- Threats and Hazards Identification

Response Templates ›

Recovery Templates ›

Exercise Evaluation

What is a Hot Wash??

The term Hot Wash comes from the US Army and the practice used by some soldiers of dousing their weapons in extremely hot water as a means of removing grit and residue after firing. While this practice by no means eliminates the need to properly break down the weapon later for cleaning, it removes the major debris and ensures the cleaning process goes more smoothly. One infantry soldier described it as "the quick and dirty cleaning that can save a lot of time later."

In terms of an Emergency Preparedness Exercise it is intended to capture immediate reactions and responses to the exercise

- Conducted with ALL players, evaluators, and facilitators/controllers
- Conducted after End Ex for 15-20 minutes
- Intended to capture ALL reactions and responses about the exercise. Eventually this will get whittled down to the top three strengths and top three opportunities
- Not a criticism of individuals, but of the processes, plans, and protocols

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Participant Feedback Form

Found in the HSEEP Toolkit under "Conduct"

Customize to meet your needs
- Handwritten
- Survey Monkey
- Other survey tool

◢ **PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM**

Thank you for participating in this exercise.

Your observations, comments, and input are greatly appreciated, and provide invaluable insight that will better prepare our [jurisdiction/organization] against threats and hazards. Any comments provided will be treated in a sensitive manner and all personal information will remain confidential. Please keep comments concise, specific, and constructive.

Part 1: General Information
Please enter your responses in the form field.

Participant Information
Name (optional):
Agency/Organization Affiliation:
Position Title:
Years of Experience in Present Position:
Location during Exercise:

Please circle the appropriate selection.

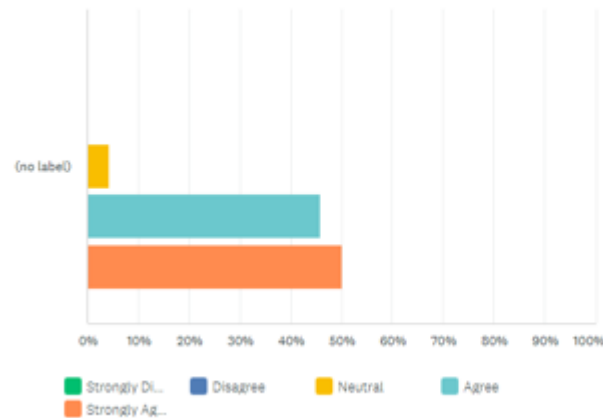| Number of Exercises Previously Participated in:	0	1 – 5	6 – 10	11 – 15	16+

Please circle the appropriate selection.

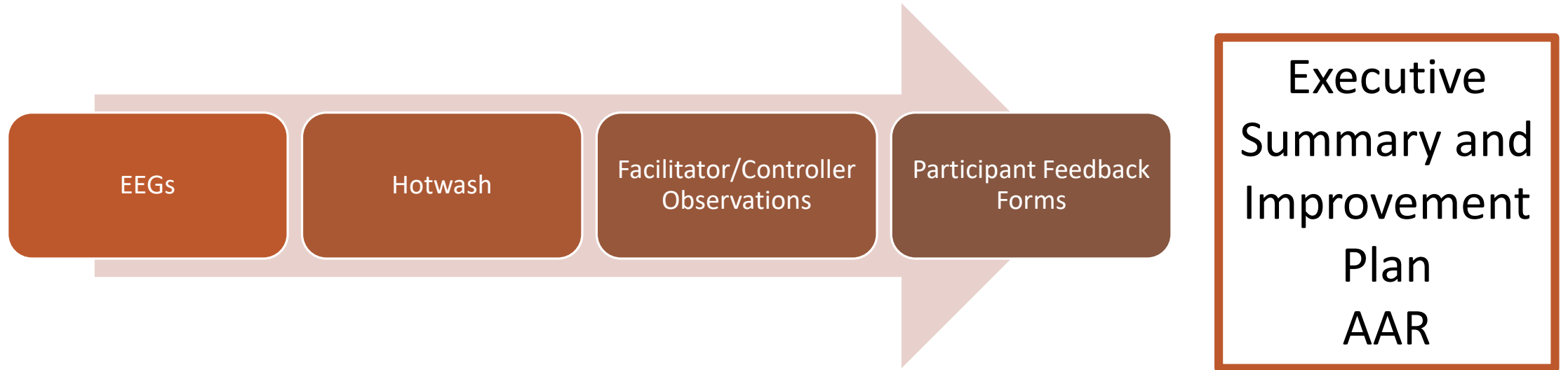| Exercise Role:	Player	Facilitator/ Controller	Evaluator	Other

Electronic Feedback (such as Survey Monkey)

- Easy to incorporate into the After Action Report

- Is anonymous

- Provides a visual tool to evaluate the exercise

Question 4: The exercise scenario was plausible and realistic:

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Evaluation Tools Lead to Quality Improvement

EEGs → Hotwash → Facilitator/Controller Observations → Participant Feedback Forms

Executive Summary and Improvement Plan
AAR

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When to write an After Action Report

- After every **REAL** event when elements of your Emergency Operational Plan were activated (this can serve as an Emergency Preparedness Exercise!)
- When community partners are involved in the response-demonstrates community-based event
- After Table-Top, Functional, and Full-Scale Exercises*

* Reminder: In CMS language, a <u>full-scale</u> exercise is equal to a FUNCTIONAL exercise in HSEEP (FEMA) language.

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Improvement Planning

About - HSEEP Resources - Preparedness Toolkit (fema.gov)

You will actually use these!!

Improvement Planning Templates

Exercises afford organizations the opportunity to evaluate capabilities and assess progress toward meeting capability targets in a controlled, low-risk setting. An effective corrective action program develops improvement plans that are dynamic documents, with corrective actions continually monitored and implemented as part of improving preparedness.

📄 **After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR-IP) Template**

📄 **After-Action Meeting Template**

After Action Report Elements

Executive Summary

1. Exercise Overview
   ◦ Description of the capabilities being tested

2. Event Summary
   ◦ Description of scenario

3. Analysis of Capabilities
   ◦ What went well
   ◦ What can be improved

4. Conclusion
   ◦ List of who played
   ◦ Summary of feedback

5. Improvement Plan
   ◦ With time line, assigned roles and responsibilities

You may choose to write a report, hold a meeting, or do both!

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Exercise Overview & Event Summary

Example #1

From HSEEP Template

EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	"Situation Open Door" Regional Virtual Exercise
Exercise Dates	**November 7, 2018** A RAVE notification was intended to be sent to the participants who had registered for the exercise. This did not happen due to issues with the RAVE system. Local partners were encouraged to conduct their own internal Communication Plans that afternoon. **November 8, 2018** An Adobe Connect meeting room was opened at 8:15 a.m. by the Healthcare Emergency Readiness Coalition Coordinator. The Exercise began at 8:30 a.m. and concluded at 11:00 a.m. A follow up Participant Feedback Survey link was sent to all participants in the afternoon.
Scope	The Exercise was coordinated and controlled through a virtual platform. Partners conducted exercise play at the own facilities or agencies with key leaders. The exercise encouraged functional components such as reaching out to community partners.
Mission Area(s)	Coordination and Response
Core Capabilities	Emergency Operations Coordination (EOC) (Capability 1: Foundation for Health Care and Medical Readiness) Information Sharing (IS) (Capability 2: Health Care and Medical Response Coordination) (Capability 3: Continuity of Healthcare Delivery) Medical Surge (MS) (Capability 4: Medical Surge)
Objectives	1. Train and prepare the Health Care and Medical Workforce 2. Ensure Preparedness is Sustainable 3. Utilize Information Sharing procedures and platforms 4. Coordinate Response Strategy, Resources, and Communications 5. Identify Essential Functions for Health Care Delivery 6. Maintain Access to Non-Personnel Resources during an Emergency 7. Respond to a Medical Surge
Threat or Hazard	Medical Surge, Severe Weather (snow), Infectious Disease

Exercise Overview & Event Summary

Example #2

A more narrative format

Incident Date/Location: June, 2022, somewhere in the NWWIHERC Region (15 Counties and four Tribes).

Incident Hazard or Threat: Highly Infectious Disease, Responder Safety and Health, NPI

Incident Summary:

Monday, 8:00 a.m. A patient living in your jurisdiction calls 911 due to increasing difficulty breathing, diarrhea and fever. Your local ambulance is dispatched with information including the chief complaint. The patient arrives in the Emergency Department and is placed in a room for his visit. Due to his symptoms, the provider chooses to test for COVID and Influenza. When doing the medical history, you learn the patient has a backyard flock of chickens and has had recent physical contact with dead birds. The patient's test results come back and he is negative for COVID but positive for Influenza A.

The local Public Health Department receives a call from the local hospital stating that they have a patient who has tested positive for Influenza A and has had recent physical contact with dead birds from their back yard flock. The local Public Health Department asks about household contacts and finds out that the patient's spouse just completed treatment for breast cancer. The patient is sick enough to need admission to the hospital. A specimen is sent to the Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene and the patient tests positive for High Pathogenic Avian Influenza.

Thursday, 10:00 a.m. The spouse of the sick individual reports to the Public Health department that she is feeling "ill" today and is worried she may have contracted Avian Influenza as well. She insists she never had any physical contact with the dead birds.

Thursday, 4:00 p.m. The teenaged son of the sick individual reports to the Public Health department that he too is feeling "ill". He also insists he has never had any physical contact with the dead birds. He admits (reluctantly) that he defied Public Health guidance and attended the Baseball Banquet at his high school because "he didn't think this could pass from person to person".

After Action Debriefing and Report: The purpose of this document is to provide an analysis of the operational coordination and communications provided by NWWIHERC Region 1.

Analysis of Capabilities

Example # 1

From HSEEP Template

[Objective 1]

The strengths and areas for improvement for each capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

[Capability 1]

Strengths

The [full or partial] capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of why the full capability level was not achieved.]

Analysis of Capabilities

Example # 2

Analysis of Incident Core Capability Performance

Aligning incident objectives and core capabilities provides a consistent taxonomy for evaluation that transcends individual events to support preparedness reporting and trend analysis. Table 1 includes the incident core capabilities with associated overall performance ratings (P, S, M, or U) as evaluated in the event after action debriefing.

Table 1-Summary of Core Capability Performance

Core Capability Performance	Rating
•	
•	
•	
Ratings Definitions	

- **(P):** The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s).
- **(S):** The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified.
- **(M):** The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s), but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies or procedures.

Core Capability: XXX

Description:

Analysis and Key Observations:

Strength(s):

Recommendation(s):

18

Conclusion: Appendices

Organization
NWWIHERC Program Coordinator
Amery Hospital
Advent Health
Aveanna Health
Burnett County Public Health
River Falls Area Hospital
Cumberland Healthcare
Mayo Clinic Health System-Eau Claire
OPEHC Statewide HERC Coordinator
Western WI Public Health Readiness Coalition
Aurora Community Services
Washburn County Emergency Management
Washburn County Public Health
Pierce County Emergency Management
Douglas County Public Health
HSHS
HealthPartners Valley Hospitals: Amery, Hudson and Westfields.
Douglas County Emergency Manager
Aveanna Health
Memorial Medical Center
Ellsworth Health Services
Western Region OPPA Office
Eau Claire City County Health Department
Cumberland Healthcare

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK SURVEY RESULTS

Question 1: What type of agency do you represent?
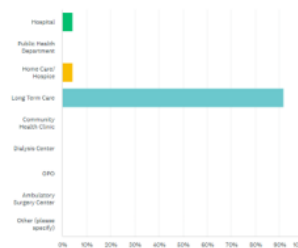
Question 2: What is your role within your organization?

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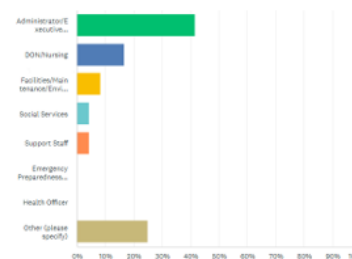
Customize forms to meet your needs

Example: Two-page Executive Summary and Improvement Plan (not a true HSEEP document)

In virtual, regional, or large-scale exercises with multiple players, this form allows each entity to provide feedback from their organization which contributes to the overall document.

Date of Exercise:	Name of Agency or Jurisdiction Completing this form:	Name, Phone, Email of PRIMARY POC for this document:	Number of Agencies that participated in this exercise (including your own): Leave Blank	Total number of local participants (people) that participated in exercise:
Please identify the 3 Greatest Strengths You Observed During this Exercise: 1. 2. 3.		Please identify the top 3 Areas of Improvement You Observed During this Exercise: 1. 2. 3.		

Target Capability	Identify the Observation you saw that should be corrected	Identified Corrective Action (How should it be fixed?)	Agency Responsible	Individual Responsible	Completion Date
Example ONLY Operational Coordination	New staff haven't been trained in Incident Command roles and responsibilities	Hold Nursing Home Incident Command Course and provide links to on-line training	Administrator will reach out to HERC	Administrator	12/31/2022

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Improvement Plan

Target Capability	Identify the Observation you saw that should be corrected	Identified Corrective Action (How should it be fixed?)	Agency Responsible	Individual Responsible	Completion Date
Example ONLY **Operational Coordination**	New staff haven't been trained in Incident Command roles and responsibilities	Hold Nursing Home Incident Command Course and provide links to on-line training	Administrator will reach out to HERC	Administrator	12/31/2022

Some forms will ask you to identify the Capability Element which include:

Plans, Organization, Equipment, Training, or Exercises

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SMART Guidelines for Corrective Actions

Guideline	Definition
Specific	Corrective actions should address the five Ws – who, what, when, where, and why. The action should be tied back to an objective that was evaluated.
Measurable	Corrective actions should include numeric or descriptive measures that define quantity, quality, cost, etc. The focus should be on the outcomes of the corrective action.
Achievable	Corrective actions should be within the control, influence, and resources of the responsible owner/assignee.
Relevant	Corrective action should be instrumental to the mission of the organization and linked to its goals or strategic intent. Validation of the corrective action ensures that it meets the goals and intent.
Time-bound	Corrective actions should have a specified and reasonable timeframe to be completed.

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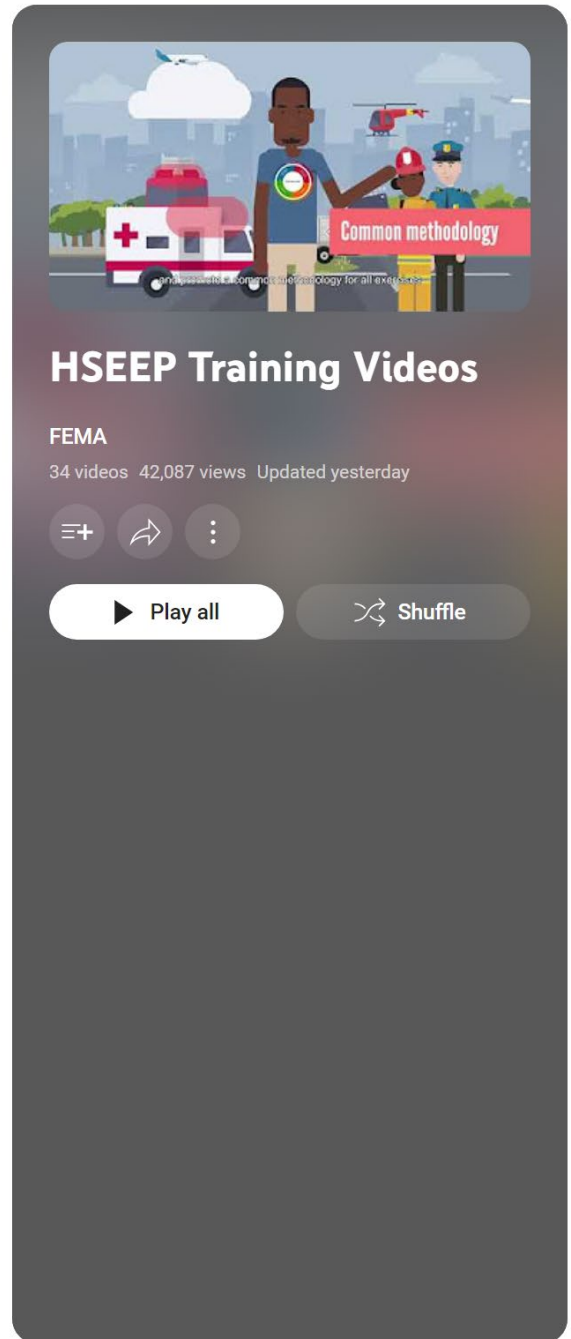
Tips for writing Corrective Actions

1. Be realistic regarding "how much you bite off".

2. Follow through! Be sure you revisit these at Emergency Preparedness meetings, staff meetings, executive meetings. Surveyors may ask to see how you've implemented these changes!

3. If changes are made to plans or processes, be sure to build training for all staff around those changes.

4. Consider testing these corrective actions in your next exercise cycle to see if additional changes need to be made.

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[HSEEP Training Videos – YouTube](#)

HSEEP Training Videos

FEMA

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1. Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEI
   FEMA · 9.5K views · 2 years ago — 5:34
2. Exercise Progression-New July 20, 2022
   FEMA · 2.3K views · 11 months ago — 7:53
3. Assessing Threats, Hazards and Risks to Build an Exercise
   FEMA · 7.4K views · 2 years ago — 3:54
4. Charting the Exercise Program Vision: The Integrated Prep
   FEMA · 6.3K views · 2 years ago — 4:43
5. Conducting an IPPW & Developing an IPP-New July 20, 202
   FEMA · 2.3K views · 11 months ago — 9:16
6. Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEI
   FEMA · 1.8K views · 11 months ago — 6:49
7. Start with Smart Exercise Planning
   FEMA · 4.4K views · 2 years ago — 4:08
8. Exercise Objective Development-New July 20, 2022
   FEMA · 1.3K views · 11 months ago — 7:45

Thank you for being a part of this series!

Please reach out to Aimee or Brian with any questions.

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Superior Health: Emergency Preparedness Tabletop Exercises

- Multiple virtual facilitated tabletop exercises offered September 2023 through September 2024. Meets CMS requirements for full-scale community-based exercise. (Sign up for one.)

- Test functional elements of your Emergency Plan.

- Complete the required documentation and receive an "After Action Report" from Optima EP.

- To register: Meet the CMS Requirement: Virtually facilitated tabletop exercise

- Send questions to Toni Kettner, tkettner@metastar.com

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