Disaster Medical Assistance Team [DMAT]

What is it?
A group of medical and support personnel designed to provide emergency medical care during a disaster or other unusual event. DMATs are part of the National Disaster Medical System, and are designed to be a rapid-response element to supplement local medical care when needed.

Who should consider joining?
Doctors, Nurses, PAs, NPs, Pharmacists, Paramedics, EMTs, Respiratory Techs, Lab Techs, Communication Experts, and Logistic/Security/Administrative personnel interested in participating in disaster response. Often only organized and trained teams like DMATs are called on to assist in this work; individual talents are coupled with disaster response training.

What do DMATs do?
Standard DMAT teams provide medical care either under austere conditions at field treatment sites established for a specific disaster response, or in hospital or clinic settings (augmenting local resources that have been overtaxed). Teams are also deployed as “stand by” resources at national special events. Specialty NDMS teams provide mortuary assistance, veterinary assistance, burn treatment care, surgical assistance, and mental health care.

Who organizes and coordinates DMAT teams?
DMATs are part of the National Disaster Medical System, which is part of the federal Office of Preparedness and Emergency Operations in the Department of Health and Human Services. NDMS provides training and equipment to authorized teams, and deploys DMATs as needed.

Are team members paid for their service?
Teams organize and train as volunteers, but are paid as employees of the federal government when deployed to a disaster or special event.

What would my commitment be if I joined a DMAT?
Each team has specific requirements, which typically include participation for several hours once a month at either a team meeting or a training event. When called to duty by NDMS, a team member is required to serve on a 2-week deployment. This occurs on average once a year. Team members are also expected to dedicate their own time for training and education, and purchase their personal equipment.

Where are teams located in Wisconsin?
Currently, Wisconsin has a statewide DMAT, known as Wisconsin-1. Wisconsin also has several Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units and the Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry (WEAVR), which are other ways to contribute to disaster preparedness and response.

How can I get more information or join the Wisconsin DMAT Team? Visit our webpage at www.wi1dmat.org for more information.