

# FACT SHEET

Department of Health and Human Services  
Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response

## Recovering from disasters: creating an evidence base for community decisions

**Recovering from disasters can take years.** As a community begins to recover, community members and leaders face a host of decisions, not just about rebuilding but also about how to make the community even better than it was before the disaster and how to bounce back faster and stronger when the next disaster strikes. In the history of our country, these decisions have been made based on what we learn from others or our own past experiences but without the benefit of a strong body of scientific evidence.

Over the next two years, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) will dedicate \$8.6 million to support research that examines long-term recovery of health systems and communities in areas of the country hard hit by Hurricane Sandy in October 2012.

Funded under the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013, the two-year research grants represent one component of a broad, ongoing effort to learn how best to strengthen communities and to help them recover as fast as possible.

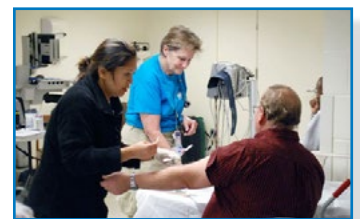
ASPR collaborated with the New York Academy of Medicine and the Institute of Medicine to engage the research community and examine how the response to Hurricane Sandy and recovery could be enhanced through scientific research. Experts from state health departments, community health organizations, federal government, and academic institutions identified some rapid

research that could promote ongoing long-term recovery efforts. ASPR and the HHS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention worked closely together and issued requests for research proposals. This coordination ensures that the research funded by each agency is complementary and addresses HHS priorities while covering distinct aspects of community resilience, health system response, and health outcomes of affected individuals and communities.

In September 2013, ASPR awarded nine research grants totally approximately \$5 million and made \$3.6 million available to support additional research requirements and resources. The grants were awarded based on scientific and technical merit, along with programmatic priorities. In conducting the research, the organizations will bring together members of the community, and the networks created through this approach may further boost long-term recovery.

The research findings will provide an evidence base for community members and leaders as they make decisions about long-term recovery. Research covers community resilience, health system response and health care access, evacuation and policy decision making, and mental health.

The researchers must conduct research that will benefit the major Hurricane Sandy disaster areas (Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, and West Virginia).



## Grant Recipients

Applicant Institution	Location	Project Title	Total Funding
American College of Emergency Physicians	TX	Lessons Learned from Hurricane Sandy and Recommendations for Improved Healthcare and Public Health Response and Recovery for Future Catastrophic Events	\$443,896
Columbia University	NY	Community Factors that Promoted Resilience in the Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy	\$596,230
		A second grant for Assessing and Strengthening Post-Storm Resilience in NYC High Rise Public Housing	\$276,143
New York University School of Medicine	NY	The Impact of Hurricane Sandy on Health Systems Care and Development of Disaster Response and Resilience Based Metrics	\$752,146
RAND Corporation	CA	Examining the Relationship between Public Health Departments and the Nongovernmental Sector to Support Stronger Partnerships for Effective Recovery of Vulnerable Populations	\$657,442
Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine	NJ	Social Capital and Resilience of Older People Exposed to Hurricane Sandy	\$681,289
University of Delaware	DE	Promoting Community Resilience in New York City After Hurricane Sandy: A Model-Based Approach	\$573,524
University of Maryland Baltimore	MD	Modeling the Interplay of Individual and Community Resilience for Recovery from Hurricane Sandy	\$416,887
University of Pittsburgh	PA	Hurricane Sandy in the Rockaways, Queens: Response and Recovery for Access to Primary Care	\$575,615

Total funding includes direct and indirect costs of this research.

To learn more about Hurricane Sandy recovery, visit [www.hhs.gov/sandy](http://www.hhs.gov/sandy) and [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov).