THA TEXAS HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION **Action Alert**

June 10, 2016 >>>Time Sensitive – Immediate Action Requested <<<

Issue:
THA Endorses Voluntary Use of Standardized, Plain-Language Emergency Codes

Action Requested:
Review new tools and resources on THA's Website as part of THA's standardized emergency code project and consider adoption of plain-language emergency codes in lieu of color-based alerts.

Background:
The goal of the standardized emergency code project is to encourage all Texas hospitals and health systems to use plain-language alerts in the event of an emergency in lieu of hospital-specific color codes. **The codes are constructed purposefully to allow hospitals to personalize the information to their facilities and provide site-specific details.**

The intent of using plain-language codes is to:

- Promote the safety of patients, visitors, physicians and hospital staff;
- Reduce errors;
- Increase transparency of communications and safety protocols;
- Align with national safety recommendations; and
- Reduce confusion for staff or physicians who work in more than one facility.

The recommended plain language codes are divided in to four categories; facility alerts, medical alerts, security alerts and weather alerts.

FACILITY ALERT

EVENT	Recommended Plain Language
Bed Capacity	"Facility Alert + Bed Capacity + Descriptor (location)"
Emergency Plan Activation	"Facility Alert + Emergency Plan Activation + Descriptor (location)"
Fire Alarm Activation	"Facility Alert + Fire Alarm Activation + Descriptor (location)"
Hazardous Spill	"Facility Alert + Hazardous Spill + Descriptor (location)"

MEDICAL ALERT

EVENT	Recommended Plain Language
Medical Alert	Code Blue

SECURITY ALERT

EVENT	Recommended Plain Language
Armed Violent Intruder/Active Shooter/Hostage	"Security Alert + Descriptor (threat/location)"
Civil Disturbance	"Security Alert + Descriptor (threat/location)"
Combative Patient/Person	"Security Alert + Security Assistance Requested + (location)"
Lockdown	"Security Alert + Descriptor (threat/location) + Instructions"
Missing Person	"Security Alert + Descriptor"
Suspicious Package	"Security Alert + Descriptor (threat/location)"

WEATHER ALERT

EVENT	Recommended Plain Language
Severe Weather	"Weather Alert + Descriptor (threat/location) + Instructions"

According to Texas Government Code 305.027, portions of this material may be considered "legislative advertising." Authorization for its publication is made by John Hawkins, Texas Hospital Association, 1108 Lavaca, Ste. 700, Austin, Texas 78701-2180.

ACTION REQUESTED:

Review new tools and resources on THA's Website as part of THA's standardized emergency code project and consider adoption of plain-language emergency codes in lieu of color-based alerts.

CONTACT:

Carrie Kroll, vice president, advocacy, quality and public health, 512/465-1043