

Maine Center for Disease
Control and Prevention

Training Needs Assessment 2026

Healthcare Coalition of Maine

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Executive Summary

The Healthcare Coalition of Maine conducted a statewide Training and Exercise Needs Assessment to identify preparedness priorities among coalition member organizations. The assessment gathered input from healthcare providers, emergency response partners, and other coalition stakeholders regarding training topics, exercise needs, and preferred training delivery formats.

A total of 85 responses were received from organizations across all coalition districts. The results indicate a strong interest in strengthening preparedness planning, improving communication and coordination during emergencies, and enhancing the ability of healthcare organizations to design and participate in exercises.

Key training priorities identified by coalition members included:

- Exercise design and implementation
- Emergency Operations Planning (EOP)
- Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP)
- Communication and coordination during emergencies
- Regulatory preparedness requirements

The results of this assessment will inform the development of the Healthcare Coalition of Maine Training and Exercise Plan (TEP) and support preparedness activities aligned with the ASPR Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) capabilities.

Key Findings

The assessment identified several key preparedness priorities among coalition members:

- Emergency preparedness planning remains the highest training priority.
- Coalition members expressed strong interest in training on exercise design and implementation.
- Communication and coordination training was frequently requested.
- Respondents indicated a preference for virtual and hybrid training opportunities.
- Regulatory preparedness training remains important for healthcare organizations.

Purpose

The Healthcare Coalition of Maine conducted a Training and Exercise Needs Assessment to identify preparedness priorities among coalition member organizations. The purpose of this assessment was to gather input from coalition partners regarding training topics, exercise needs, and preferred delivery formats in order to inform the development of the Healthcare Coalition Training and Exercise Plan (TEP).

The results of this assessment will guide statewide and district-level preparedness activities, including the identification of region-specific hazards and tailored training and exercise priorities across coalition districts that support the ASPR Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) capabilities, including:

1. Operational Coordination
2. Medical Surge
3. Situational Assessment
4. Resource Management
5. Information Sharing

Methodology

The assessment was distributed electronically to Healthcare Coalition members statewide. Participants were asked to identify:

- Their organizational role
- Facility type
- Current hazard assessment practices
- Key training needs
- Preferred training delivery methods
- Supporting materials needed for training and exercises

The survey remained open from February 19 to March 16, 2026 to allow broad participation across coalition districts.

Participation

A total of 85 responses were received from coalition member organizations across all districts of the Healthcare Coalition of Maine.

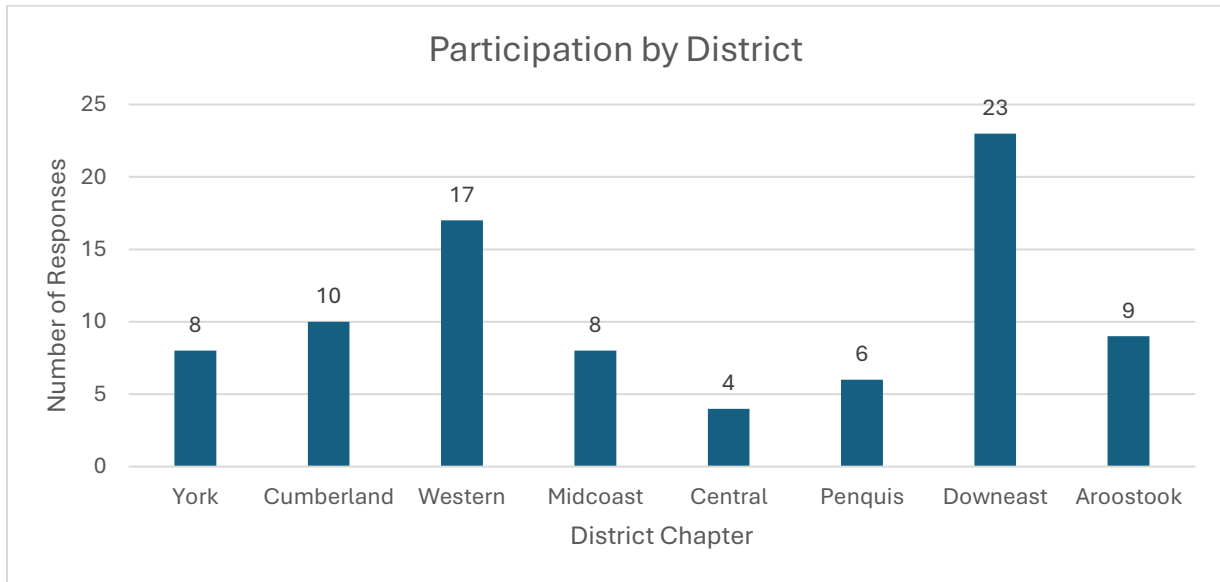


Figure 1: Survey Participation by District

Downeast and Western districts had the highest participation levels (23 for Downeast and 17 for Western), representing nearly half of the total responses.

Respondent Organization Types

Survey respondents represented a broad range of healthcare and emergency response partners, including:

- Hospitals
- Long-term care and assisted living facilities
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Dialysis and outpatient care providers
- Emergency management agencies
- Public health agencies
- Behavioral health providers
- Tribal health organizations

- Hospice providers
- Municipal partners

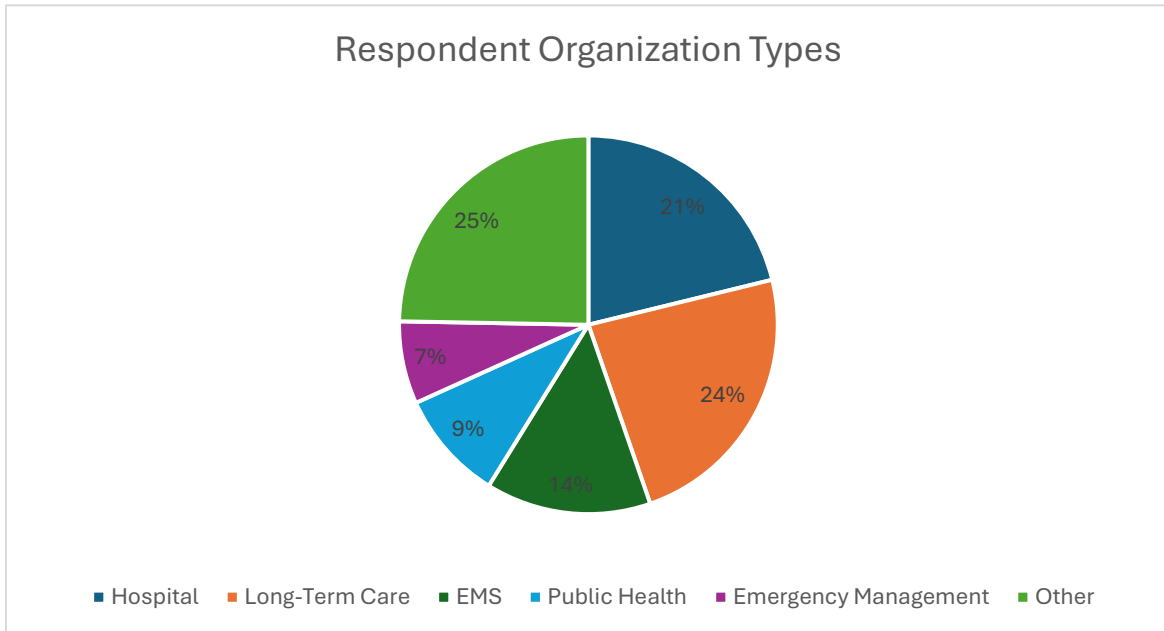


Figure 2: Respondent Organization Types

The diversity of respondents demonstrates the multidisciplinary nature of the Healthcare Coalition and highlights the importance of cross-sector collaboration in emergency preparedness.

Training Needs

The most frequently identified training needs focused on emergency preparedness planning, exercise development, and communication coordination.

Top Training Priorities

The most requested training topics included:

- **Designing exercises and drills**
- **Communication and coordination during emergencies**
- **Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP)**
- **Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) development**
- **Regulatory preparedness requirements (CMS, Fire Marshal, Joint Commission)**

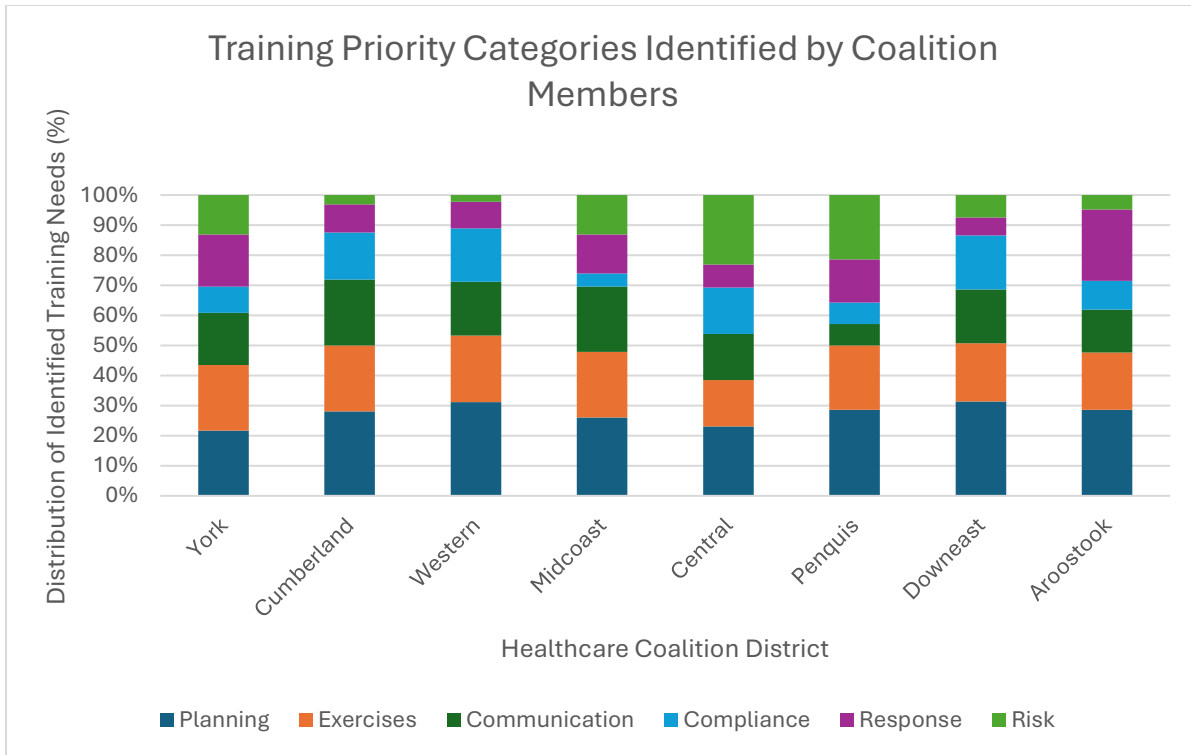


Figure 3: Training Priority Categories Identified by Coalition Members

The results indicate that preparedness planning topics, including Emergency Operations Plans and Continuity of Operations Planning, were the most frequently selected training needs. Exercise development and communication training were also commonly requested, demonstrating a need for practical training that strengthens emergency response coordination across coalition partners.

Training Delivery Preferences

Respondents were also asked to identify their preferred methods for receiving preparedness training.

The most commonly preferred training formats included:

- **Virtual training sessions and webinars**
- **In-person training opportunities**
- **Self-paced online learning**
- **Hands-on workshops and exercises**

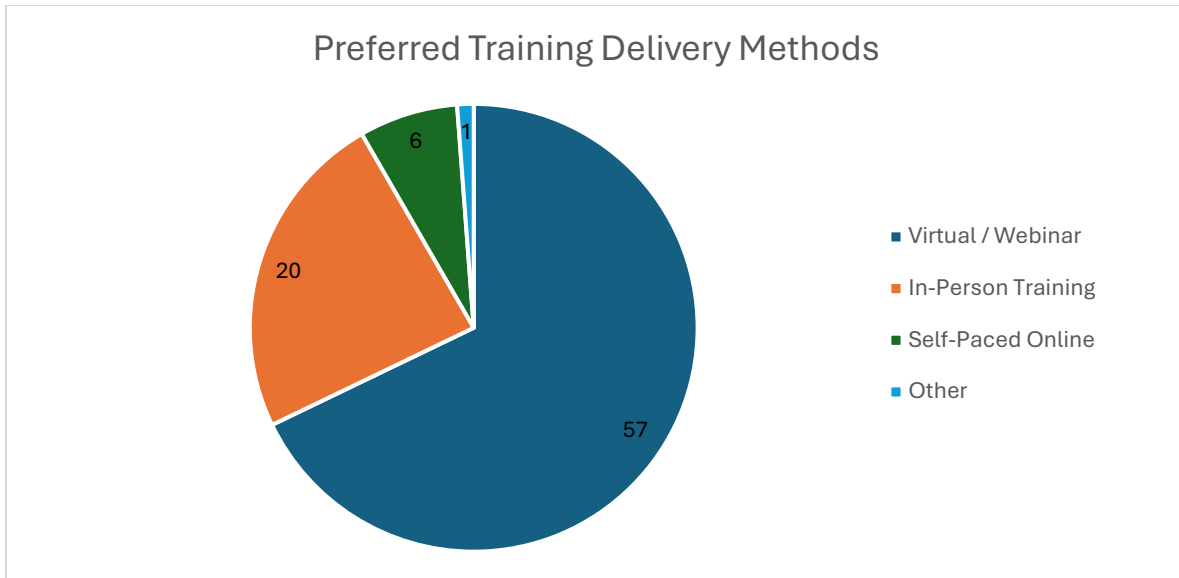


Figure 4: Preferred Training Delivery Method

These findings suggest coalition members prefer a blended training approach, combining accessible virtual learning with in-person collaboration and practical exercises.

Hazard and Risk Assessment Practices

Respondents reported using a variety of methods to identify hazards and risks within their organizations. Common approaches included:

- Hazard Vulnerability Assessments (HVA)
- Organizational risk assessments
- Emergency preparedness program reviews
- Regulatory compliance assessments

These processes help organizations identify vulnerabilities and inform preparedness planning efforts.

District-Specific Needs and Hazard Analysis

This section integrates findings from the 2026 Training Needs Assessment with regional hazard considerations to inform district-level training and exercise priorities. This approach ensures that coalition activities are both data-driven and risk-informed, consistent with ASPR HPP expectations.

York District

Needs/Observations

Hazards include coastal storms, seasonal population surges, and evacuation events. Assessment results highlight needs related to medical surge, communication, and coordination.

Training

Training will focus on evacuation planning, surge coordination, and multi-agency collaboration.

Exercise

Exercises will include evacuation scenarios and coordination with emergency management partners to support large-scale population movement.

Cumberland District

Needs/Observations

A diverse region that blends urban, suburban, rural and coastal communities with complex healthcare systems, hazards include cybersecurity incidents, infrastructure disruptions, and mass casualty events. Assessment results show strong needs across communication, planning, exercise design, and regulatory preparedness.

Training

Training will focus on cybersecurity preparedness, crisis communication, and regulatory compliance.

Exercise

Exercises will include cyber incident scenarios and communication coordination exercises to support response across complex healthcare systems.

Western District

Needs/Observations

Key hazards include severe winter storms, rural mass casualty incidents, and geographic access challenges. Assessment results identify exercise design and planning as primary needs, indicating a need for structured preparedness development.

Training

Training will prioritize HSEEP-aligned exercise design, COOP development, and communication coordination.

Exercise

Exercises will include mass casualty scenarios and winter storm response coordination, with a focus on building internally developed and sustainable exercise programs.

Midcoast District

Needs/Observations

Key hazards include coastal flooding, transportation incidents, and resource access challenges. Assessment results demonstrate moderate needs across planning, communication, and risk assessment.

Training

Training will focus on Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) development, resource coordination, and hazard vulnerability assessment (HVA).

Exercise

Exercises will emphasize coordination and resource management during coastal and transportation-related incidents.

Central District

Needs/Observations

Hazards include flooding, infrastructure disruptions, and moderate rural access challenges. Assessment results show lower response volume but identify risk assessment and planning as key needs, indicating a need for foundational preparedness development.

Training

Training will focus on hazard vulnerability assessment (HVA), basic emergency planning, and communication coordination.

Exercise

Exercises will include introductory tabletop exercises and communication drills to build baseline preparedness capacity.

Penquis District

Needs/Observations

Hazards include severe weather, transportation barriers, and limited access to healthcare resources. Assessment results identify risk assessment as a primary need, along with planning and surge coordination.

Training

Training will prioritize hazard vulnerability assessment (HVA), incident command coordination, and surge planning.

Exercise

Exercises will include regional coordination scenarios and Medical Response and Surge Exercises (MRSE) to strengthen system-wide response.

Downeast District

Needs/Observations

Key hazards include coastal storms, flooding, transportation disruptions, and rural healthcare access challenges. Assessment results indicate high demand across emergency preparedness planning, exercise design, communication, and regulatory preparedness. This district demonstrates a high level of engagement and readiness for advanced training.

Training

Training will focus on advanced Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) development, multi-agency coordination, communication strategies, and regulatory preparedness.

Exercise

Exercises will emphasize coastal storm response scenarios and multi-agency coordination to strengthen operational readiness and cross-sector communication.

Aroostook District

Needs/Observations

Key hazards include extreme winter weather, geographic isolation, and cross-border response considerations. Assessment results identify strong needs related to medical surge and exercise design.

Training

Training will focus on rural surge planning, cross-border coordination, and exercise development.

Exercise

Exercises will include rural surge scenarios and regional coordination events to address geographic and access challenges.

District Training Needs & Hazard Priority Matrix

District	Planning	Exercise Design	Communication	Regulatory	Surge/Operations	Risk
York	2	2	2	1	2	2
Cumberland	2	2	3	2	2	1
Western	2	3	2	2	2	1
Midcoast	2	2	2	1	2	2
Central	1	1	1	1	1	3
Penquis	2	1	1	1	2	3
Downeast	3	3	3	3	2	2
Aroostook	1	2	2	1	3	1

Figure 5. District Training Needs and Hazard Priority Heat Map Based on 2026 Assessment

Implications for Coalition Preparedness

The results of this assessment will guide coalition planning and support the development of future training and exercise opportunities for Healthcare Coalition members.

Based on the assessment findings, the coalition will prioritize activities that strengthen:

- Healthcare coordination during emergencies
- Organizational emergency preparedness planning
- Exercise design and implementation
- Communication and information sharing
- Regulatory preparedness and compliance

Training opportunities will be delivered through a combination of:

- Virtual webinars
- In-person workshops
- Exercises and drills
- Self-paced training opportunities

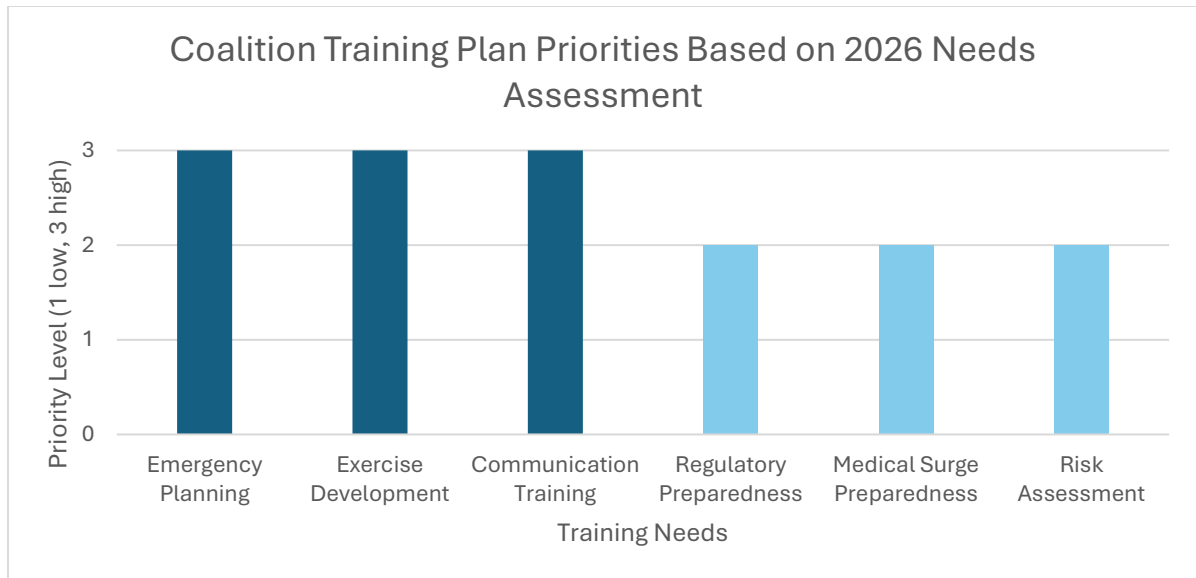


Figure 6: Coalition Training Plan Priorities Based on 2026 Needs Assessment

Next Steps

The Healthcare Coalition of Maine will use the results of this assessment to inform the development of a multi-year Training and Exercise Plan that supports coalition preparedness goals and aligns with ASPR Hospital Preparedness Program requirements.

Planned activities include:

- Statewide preparedness trainings
- District-level workshops and exercises
- Coalition coordination drills
- Medical surge and cyber incident exercises

These efforts will strengthen collaboration among healthcare organizations and improve the healthcare system’s ability to respond to emergencies affecting communities across Maine.