


THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
**MD Anderson**  
**Cancer Center**  
Making Cancer History®



**Planning for Uncertainty: Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Planning**

**Diagnostic Imaging Experience**

**Dianna Cody, Ph.D.**  
Professor  
Houston, TX

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**Hurricane preparation – spooky to see empty grocery aisles...**



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**Hurricane Harvey – August 26, 2017**



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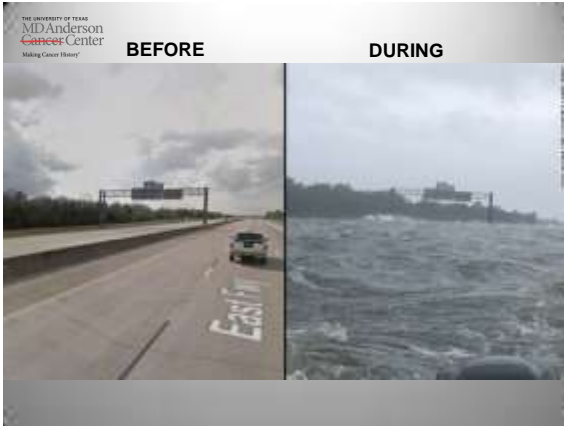
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MD Anderson Blvd. - Facing Rotary House

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Bennett

Instructor  
Kelsey  
Mathieu

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### Planning (work)

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- Preparation meetings with Radiology administration & leaders
- Frequent weather briefings (listened only to the most optimistic version?)
- Institution determined 'ride-out' status (too late as it turned out)
- Planned for daily call-in t-cons to keep everyone up to date
- Those who called in were expected to notify their teams

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### Imaging Physics Planning

- As Clinical Operations Director, it fell to me to dial in each day
- After each t-con, I sent a summary to all department faculty
- (This formed the backbone of my daily activities)
- Required stable telephone & email connections (lucky)
- Usually mid-day, after the institutional emergency committees had met




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### Imaging Physics clinical duties during closure

- Daily Quality Control Review
  - CT, MR (No NucS – no pharmaceuticals)
  - Did field one issue of note
- CT units fully staffed
- MR service a challenge
  - Not a designated urgent care need
  - Thus, not staffed when flood waters hit
  - Techs nearby unable to leave families
  - No MR service for several days...




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### Imaging Services Provided

- Lots of out-of-town patients were stranded nearby.
- Many made it to our area for their scheduled exams.
- None were turned away...
- Workload: mostly in-patients plus a few out-patients
- CLOSED Sun Aug 27 through Tues Sept 5.
- NINE days! (Mon Sept 4 = Labor Day)




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### Biggest issues during closure?

- Maintaining security for multiple buildings and entrances
- Convincing faculty & staff NOT to show up to help




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### Consequences...

One lobby area was flooded (by the time we opened, any damage was invisible)

Soft opening as we ramped up – called in some patients with known serious conditions to get restarted

Super busy for several weeks as rescheduled exams were performed...




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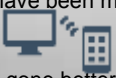
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### Summary - work

- What worked well – planned daily t-cons kept everyone up to date and connected.
- Supervisor on-site joined the daily t-cons. This was CRITICAL.
- Remote access was stable. If computer systems had failed, there would have been much bigger issues...



- What could have gone better – the institution should have initiated 'ride-out' teams sooner, when transportation was feasible.

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### Consequences - regional

- Weird stories – car roofs damaged by boat propellers...
- Some deaths, lots of near misses (Exec Sec Son)
- Some neighborhoods damaged by 'planned' water release (grand piano home) as flood gates weakened
- One area was closed to traffic for many months as damn was fortified
- LOTS of stories of strangers helping each other
- Folks with boats chauffeuring folks around (medical)
- Folks delivering free food to those clearing debris
- Furniture store housed many families without homes



\$200K goal → \$37M



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### Plan – for me personally

- Husband in town for party (cancelled). He insisted we leave.
- Drove to just south of Dallas. Hotel was full of Houstonites.
- Left our doggie-cam pointed toward front yard to watch for flood waters remotely. VERY helpful, highly recommended!
- Also checked with neighbors to see who was staying put.
- Watched weather channel exclusively for several days...
- Under-current of tension did not allow focus on much else.




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### Consequences - personally

- No damage to my home (twigs in yard)
- Of 26 faculty, 3 had flood damage at home (12%)
- Several are in process of raising homes now (\$)
- Next time –
- Also position camera toward back yard. Apparently flood waters were high from that direction as well...




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**Open Faculty Position – Assistant Professor**  
University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

- Houston, TX
- ENORMOUS equipment base
- Competitive salary
- Excellent benefits
- Ph.D. (D.M.P.)
- Some flexibility –
  - Focus area of interest
  - Keep broad expertise
- X-ray based modalities
- Academic environment
- Imaging Physics Dept. (>100)

Contact: [dcody@mdanderson.org](mailto:dcody@mdanderson.org)

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