

**Hurricane Maria Project**  
**Information Providers Interview Guide for:**  
**School and Medical Center Administrators**

OMB Control #0693-0078

Expiration Date: 07-31-2022

Script for Introduction:

“Thank you for taking the time to meet with us today. We are interested in your perspective on information and communications related to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico on September 20, 2017. We would like to better understand this hurricane because it impacted a non-continental and Spanish-speaking U.S. island. Ideally, these interviews will lead to beneficial recommendations to policy, procedures, and codes. We realize that the hurricane was a few years ago, and some details may not readily come to mind. We will try to walk you through different topics and events to aid your memory, but let us know if you need any clarifications. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, we just want to understand your perspectives and experience. Your responses will never be linked to your individual identity, instead, findings will be attributed to a “Hurricane Information Provider” at the national, commonwealth, regional, or local level, and will only be shared in aggregate detail. Are you ready to begin?”

Required Script for Paperwork Reduction Act:

“A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with an information collection subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 unless the information collection has a currently valid OMB Control Number. The approved OMB Control Number for this information collection is 0693-0078. Without this approval, we could not conduct this information collection. Public reporting for this information collection is estimated to be approximately 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection. All responses to this information collection are voluntary. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the National Institute of Standards and Technology at: Katherine Johnson, Social Scientist and National Construction Safety Team Member, NIST Engineering Laboratory; or contact at [katherine.johnson@nist.gov](mailto:katherine.johnson@nist.gov).”

### Section A. Background Questions

1. Please describe to us the position you held in the days prior to Hurricane Maria.
  - a. How long had you held that position?
2. What were your primary roles and duties in your position with regard to informing or communicating about hurricanes?
3. Who are the groups or individuals you are responsible for communicating too? We will refer to these people in further questions as your “stakeholders”.
4. Before Hurricanes Irma and Maria, can you briefly describe any previous experiences you’ve had with hurricanes?

### Section B. Storm Data and Situational Awareness

5. Are there sheltering locations within the buildings?
6. Pre-hurricane planning for sheltering locations or evacuation? Please describe plans and actions to be taken by the staff/patients/visitors.
7. Pre-hurricane planning for communication of emergency information? Please describe plans and actions to be taken by the staff/patients/visitors.
8. Please tell me the story of what happened during Hurricane Maria? How did you know that something was wrong? What did you do next?
  - a. How did you obtain awareness about Hurricane Maria?
  - b. From whom were you obtaining storm information, forecasts, data, etc.?
  - c. What information did you obtain from these sources?
9. How did you communicate with the public before and during Hurricane Maria? Overall, please walk me through the process of how you disseminated specific information over time, via particular channels before the storm hit.
10. Where did people take shelter before Hurricane Maria hit? Teachers, students, doctors/staff, patients? Were some evacuated? If so, to where?
11. Who made the decision – when to evacuate and where? How did they make this decision?
12. What were the consequences of Hurricane Maria?

### Section C. Inter-agency Coordination

13. Reflecting back on the hurricane, how well do you think communication and inter-agency coordination (if any) worked between the NHC and different information-providers involved (e.g. WFOs, SERFC, WPC, and OPC, EM’s, the media, and the public)?

14. Can you please describe one or two specific examples of communication success between particular organizations, describing what worked well and why?
15. Can you think of one to two examples when communications did not work well, or difficulties that you or coworkers/staff/ or colleagues encountered? Please identify what did not work well (e.g. procedures, systems, personnel, etc.).
  - a. What do you think could be done to improve on these problems?
16. In your perspective, how consistent was information related to Hurricane Maria as it was disseminated throughout the weather community (i.e. NHC, WFOs, meteorologists)?
  - a. Do any key issues seem important to improve effective communication?

#### Section D. Ending Questions

We're almost finished with the interview. We just have a few last questions.

17. Since Hurricane Maria, were there any new procedures, guidelines, or policy changes that have been developed and/or implemented relating to hurricane products, communication, and/or interagency coordination? Can you describe these changes or share with us any updated products?
18. If you were to go through an experience like Hurricane Maria again, is there anything you would suggest for yourself or others do differently? Can you explain why and how?
  - a. Are there any new products, rules, or services that would aid in the changes you would suggest? If so, which ones (and how would they be used)?
19. Before we go, is there anyone else whom you think we should reach out to for an interview on these topics? (e.g., someone influential in communicating hurricane risks, forecasts, etc. to the public)
20. Thank you for your time. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us that we didn't already discuss?