DNC: Lessons Learned

Christopher B. Colwell, M.D.
Medical Director, Denver Paramedic Division and Denver Fire Department
Introduction

- Bid awarded Jan. 2007
- 75,000 projected attendees
- 15,000 media
- Unknown number of protestors
Planning Phase

- National Response Framework (NRF)
  - Emergency Support Function (ESF) 1-15
  - Secret service committee structure does not incorporate NRF
    - ESF 8 (public health and medical) had to be re-created
      - Insert early
There will not be enough funding
  - 50 million
  - Some will come from out-of-pocket

Law enforcement is our friend
  - Not in all things

Wish-list: Pick what you absolutely need
  - Then don’t give in
  - Avoid “big net” approach
Plan for What Will Happen

- Balance planning assumptions between catastrophe and reality
  - Realistic planning assumptions
    - Load and unload
    - Disabled
Focus on What You Do Well

- Now is not the time to try something new
- Focus on what you should already have in place
  - What would you do if faced with a big event today
- Drills
  - This was the best incentive to do hospital-wide drills
Education

- Practical education of our non-medical partners
  - Police were worried about exposures
    - Stool, urine, blood, white powder
      - Education tool to learn about what a real exposure is
  - Prevention
    - Water
      - Hydrated
Who Will Be There?

- National Guard
- DMATs
- Secret Service medical
- Many others
Mobility

- Important
- Not always easy
Get Help

- Reach out to other cities that have hosted similar events in the past
  - Boston
  - New York
  - Los Angeles
Staffing

- At the venue
  - Go heavy
  - Distribute as self-sufficient strike teams on each level
    - Changing levels becomes more difficult as venue fills up
  - Same personnel each day means more efficiency
Medical Care

- On-site medical aid stations with robust capabilities
  - Broad formularies
  - Adequate bed space
  - Medical staff
    - On site physicians/nurses/paramedics
      - Reduced ambulance transports
      - Surges
  - No one wants to leave the venue
Bike Teams

- 6700 miles biked
- 673 calls
- Prevented 253 ambulance responses
- Very popular
Credentialing

- Be able to do on the fly
  - Injuries
  - Sick
  - Lost
  - Stolen
- Credential early!
- Relationship building is essential
  - Secret service
Flexibility

- In medical care area
  - VIPs bring doctors with them
  - Secret service physicians
  - Many will have opinions
Conclusions

- Don’t completely re-work your system
- Do well what you do often
- Plan ahead
  - Be ready for what will happen
  - And early
Conclusions

- Take advantage of the opportunity
- Be flexible
  - Be ready for last-minute changes
- Enjoy!