

Sonya Stokes

VISN Emergency Manager, Veterans Healthcare Administration South Central VA healthcare Network

Speaker Bio:

Sonya Stokes is a retired Army Veteran and seasoned emergency management executive with more than 30 plus years of experience in senior healthcare leadership. She has led complex, multi-agency preparedness, response, and recovery operations across the Department of Veterans Affairs. Sonya currently serves as the Senior Emergency Management Program Manager for the Department of Veteran Affairs, where she directs a comprehensive emergency management program for more than 80 healthcare delivery sites across 13 states and territories. In this role, she manages federal patient movement through multiple Federal Coordinating Centers, oversees a \$30 million deployable capability to establish alternate care sites, and leads a multidisciplinary team supporting veterans and civilians during hurricanes, pandemics, and other major disasters. Sonya holds a Bachelor's degree in Occupational Environmental Management with a minor in Regulatory Compliance, along with extensive specialized training in industrial hygiene, emergency response, and regulatory standards.

Presentation:

Boots on the Ground Serving Veterans in their Communities

SUPPORTING VETERANS AND THE COMMUNITY DURING TIMES OF DISASTER - The Directors Advance Coordination Team (DAC-T) is a mission-ready, rapidly deployable VA capability designed to sustain continuity of care for Veterans and their communities before, during, and after disasters. As Veterans serving Veterans, the DAC-T operates an Alternate Care Site with over 20 different configurations of mobile equipment, creating a fully self-sufficient, self-sustaining 'boots on the ground' presence that supports VA medical centers and community-based outpatient clinics when local resources are strained or disrupted. The team delivers integrated support for fuel, food, staffing, mental health and counseling, housing assistance, primary and specialty care, pharmacy services, outreach, and social resources, ensuring that Veterans continue to receive comprehensive care

close to where they live. By partnering with other federal agencies and non-profit organizations, the DAC-T strengthens local resilience, closes critical service gaps, and helps restore healthcare operations and community stability in the wake of emergencies and disasters.