



## Med Sled Case Study Long Beach Memorial Medical Center

---

### Overview

As a company, being located in southern California has great upsides. The nice weather is one. On the other hand, as a hospital in southern California, emergency evacuations are a true concern. Whether a spreading wildfire or an earthquake, southern California has seen its share of disasters.

Emergency evacuation and disaster training are priorities at the 550-bed Long Beach Memorial Medical Center in Long Beach, CA. The hospital is a certified adult and pediatric trauma center as well as a disaster resource center.

If the state had mandated an evacuation in early 2008, the staff at Long Beach would have had to evacuate people using the “blanket carry” method, which requires a ratio of five-to-six staff members per one patient.

The entire community began searching for an emergency preparedness solution that would suit their needs for a more effective patient evacuation.

### Strategy

Medical center administrators put together a list of several evacuation products that they would be able to purchase through grant funding. The list included sled-like devices and evacuation stair chairs. Hospital Disaster Coordinator, J.C. Arzaga, was faced with the final decision.

“A few different companies and products were presented to us,” said Arzaga. “I did my research and determined Med Sled was the best.”

In January 2008, the Long Beach Medical Center ordered 60 standard Med Sleds, a compact and durable sled that uses the ‘roll and drag’ method, which ensures that non-ambulatory individuals and medical equipment are transported safely in emergency situations. The hospital also purchased several bariatric sleds to accommodate larger patients.

In February, the Long Beach Memorial Emergency Preparedness Task Force provided a series of 20-minute nursing skills seminars to educate nearly 3,000 staff members. One feature of the Med Sled is the product’s ease of use and “just-in-time” training. This means that hospital staff needs little to no education with the product in order to use it properly.

“Our task force has been the champion instructor and we did educate all of our staff on the products we have and where they were located within the facility,” said Arzaga. “We did this in cooperation with the Long Beach Fire Department, so it really was a community effort.”

In addition to the Med Sleds, Long Beach Memorial has stair chairs and pediatric evacuation equipment as part of their evacuation plans.

## Results

Within six months of having the Med Sleds, Long Beach Memorial initiated an evacuation drill where the sleds were needed. They have also been used in practice runs to evacuate certain floors or units of the hospital and Arzaga said he feels much more secure in the hospital's level of preparedness. With the Med Sleds, one hospital staff member alone can now easily evacuate a patient almost twice their size. This includes multi-level evacuations.

"The deployment is so easy," said Arzaga. "The Med Sled is really user friendly and it's great that our fire department can cross train on it as well. I would absolutely recommend it to other hospitals."