New resources from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality are now available to help communities identify the health care facilities available and prepared to provide assistance in the event of a public health emergency or disaster.

Emergency Preparedness Atlas: U.S. Nursing Home and Hospital Facilities (http://www.ahrq.gov/prep/nursinghomes/atlas.htm) presents six case studies in North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, California, Washington, and Utah that each include a series of maps depicting the locations and capacities of nursing homes and hospitals, as well as their geographic relationship to a variety of emergency management and bioterrorism preparedness regions, such as HAZMAT response regions, emergency response regions, and Red Cross chapters. The Atlas also includes maps of all 50 states that show the locations of hospitals and nursing homes and, in the case study states, the locations relative to the distribution of the older adult population.

Nursing Homes in Public Health Emergencies: Special Needs and Potential Roles (http://www.ahrq.gov/prep/nursinghomes/report.htm) presents the results of a series of focus groups to collect information about disaster-related and bioterrorism-related planning activities among nursing homes in the same six states used in the Atlas case studies. The report addresses the roles that nursing homes could play in regional preparedness (e.g., arranging with hospitals to transfer their less critically ill or recovering patients to nursing homes).

Alzheimer’s Organization Recognizes NYC Facilities

Two New York City facilities that provide care to individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias are the first to be honored with the Alzheimer’s Foundation of America’s (AFA) “Excellence in Care Dementia Program of Distinction” status, which is bestowed upon dementia care settings that have achieved AFA’s nationwide, voluntary standards.

The facilities include The 80th Street Residence, a 69-bed assisted living residence in Manhattan that specializes in Alzheimer’s disease and dementia care, and Ozanam Hall of Queens Nursing Home, Inc., a skilled geriatric and short-term rehabilitation facility in Bayside in which 200 of its 432 residents have Alzheimer’s disease.

Introduced in November 2006, the Excellence in Care program involves comprehensive standards, onsite evaluation, and consultation to promote continual performance improvement for dementia care settings. Evaluation components include a setting’s physical environment, safety procedures, program activities, staff-client interaction, and training for staff and families.