

211 LA

Area of Innovation: Disaster Preparedness

Summary of the Innovation:

Rapid Disaster Response: 211 LA Mobilizes to Provide Emergency Housing & Recovery Services for Wildfire Survivors

The Challenge that the Innovation Addressed:

On January 7th, 2025, a fierce windstorm with gusts up to 100 mph quickly spread, fueling two significant wildfires in Los Angeles County. The Eaton Fire ravaged the cities of Altadena and Pasadena, claiming at least 17 lives, destroying approximately 7,000 structures, and burning over 14,000 acres. The Palisades Fire impacted the Pacific Palisades, Malibu, and areas of the Santa Monica Mountains, resulting in 12 fatalities, nearly 12,000 destroyed structures, and over 23,000 acres burned. Each fire displaced thousands of residents, overwhelming emergency response systems and creating an urgent need for shelter, food, and recovery services.

Traditional disaster relief efforts struggled to keep up with the scale of destruction, prompting the need for a coordinated, multi-sector approach to ensure immediate and long-term support for affected communities.

The Decision-Making and Implementation Process:

In response, 211 LA activated its disaster response protocol to ensure those affected received immediate and ongoing support. The process involved close coordination with a variety of partners to provide essential resources and services, including temporary housing, disaster relief, and long-term recovery support.

The key decision-making and implementation steps were:

- Partnering with Airbnb.org: Recognizing the urgent need for temporary housing, 211 LA partnered with Airbnb.org to provide free housing to displaced residents. This collaboration enabled 211 LA to leverage Airbnb's network of hosts offering accommodations at no charge, ensuring residents had immediate places to stay. 211 LA's role was critical in identifying those in need and connecting them with available stays in affected areas like Altadena, Malibu, Pacific Palisades, Pasadena, Santa Monica, and Sylmar.
- Coordinating with the American Red Cross: In parallel, 211 LA worked with the American Red Cross to provide shelter placements and disaster case management. The Red Cross supported 211 LA's efforts by providing volunteer teams trained in disaster casework to assist residents in taking their initial recovery steps.
- Collaborating with Hilton and American Express: Hilton and American Express joined the response efforts, securing hotel stays for displaced residents. This partnership ensured immediate shelter for those in need while transitioning to longer-term housing solutions.
- Engaging Local Assistance Centers (LACs) and Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs): 211 LA collaborated with county officials and established LACs and DRCs to provide on-the-ground services, including financial aid, housing assistance, and mental health support.

The Outcome/Impact of the Innovation:

The multi-partner collaboration, including Airbnb.org, American Red Cross, Hilton, and American Express, achieved significant milestones and demonstrated the effectiveness of community-led disaster response. Here are key outcomes:

As of February 25th, 2025

- Over 88,000 calls answered: The 211 LA disaster hotline ensured that a large volume of calls from survivors and individuals affected by the wildfires were

handled quickly, connecting them to essential services like housing, food, and emotional support.

- 1.7 million total website page views: With the launch of 211 LA's disaster recovery website, individuals had direct access to resources, recovery tips, and housing assistance, reaching a broad audience and providing a central point for up-to-date information.
- 5.3 million social media reach: Social media outreach played a vital role in ensuring that wildfire survivors, even those not directly connected through traditional channels, received vital information on available services.
- Over 6,000 individuals enrolled in recovery care coordination: This initiative provided personalized support for survivors, helping them navigate the recovery process and access essential services for long-term recovery.
- 786 cases opened at Disaster Assistance Centers (DACs): 211 LA facilitated in-person support at LACs, assisting families and individuals with applications for financial relief, recovery planning, and more.
- 491 households assisted through Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) activation/response: During power outages, 211 LA ensured that affected households were connected with emergency resources, including temporary housing and vital community services.
- Over 32,000 contacts were reached via SMS text blasts about resources and care coordination updates.

Success Stories & Community Impact:

- Through 211 LA's coordination, Airbnb.org provided temporary housing stays for 19,000 displaced families and individuals. The availability of emergency housing was crucial, offering families a place to stay while they worked through the immediate aftermath of the fires.
- Volunteers from the American Red Cross were integral to the success of the recovery efforts, helping provide disaster casework services and offering critical

support to families seeking long-term recovery. They assisted 211 LA with personalized recovery planning.

- The Hilton and American Express partnership enabled 211 LA to offer displaced residents hotel accommodations, ensuring no one was left without a safe place to stay. The collaboration provided 20,000 Hilton night stays.

Potential Applicability to Other Members:

Thanks to its modular design, collaborative approach, and use of the CareSuite technology platform, this innovation is ideal for a wide range of disaster response scenarios.

The modular structure means that each component, such as the 211 LA hotline, website, text messaging system, and recovery care coordination model, can be adopted independently. Other organizations can integrate these elements into their own disaster response strategies, whether it's adopting the website and communication systems or implementing a similar case management framework.

The partnerships that 211 LA formed with organizations like Airbnb.org, American Red Cross, and Hilton are easily replicable. By partnering with local and national organizations, other I&R providers can bring in resources such as temporary housing, financial assistance, and emergency support, just as 211 LA did.

The case management integration approach, with its focus on recovery care coordination, is another aspect that other I&R providers can easily adopt. Using adaptable case management software and trained staff, organizations can provide personalized support to disaster survivors and track their progress through long-term recovery.