

MISSISSIPPI HEALTHCARE

The healthcare network of southern Mississippi was hard hit during Hurricane Katrina. The Hancock Medical Center was almost directly in the eye of the storm and received hurricane force winds and four feet of storm surge flooding that lasted 12 hours. The 104 bed Level 2 emergency hospital suffered severe and extensive damages making the surgery area and emergency room facilities non-functional.

In addition Katrina destroyed roads and bridges, crippling the Coast's transportation network. This affected response and transport times for critical medical care needs. FEMA contracted emergency air medical transport service (using an AS350 BA ASTAR Helicopter) capable of supporting and transporting critically injured patients. This assistance was vital to the safety and welfare of area residents and recovery workers.

As of June 30, 2007 the air ambulance service was discontinued because one side of the Bay St. Louis Bridge has been reopened, allowing access to medical facilities. Hancock Medical's emergency and surgery activities are now fully functional.

To date, FEMA has obligated (paid to the state) \$54.5 million to help restore damaged health and medical services in Mississippi. The state has paid out approximately \$13 million of those obligated totals to its applicants.