ADDENDUM D

Medical Care: Zero to Full Competency

Curious how Tier, Stage, and Phase relate? See the Glossary.

Why This Addendum Exists

Chapter 5 tells you what to stock and do at each tier of a disruption. It does not tell you how to actually become competent at first aid and medical care when professional help is delayed, unavailable, or gone entirely. This addendum is a skill-building curriculum for exactly that: a structured path from no relevant medical knowledge to genuine, tested competency, built from real certifications, courses, and hands-on practice.

It's organized by skill stage, not by disaster duration, following the same structure as Addendum A. Treat the self-check at the end of each stage as the actual gate, not the time spent.

Four stages: Foundations (basic safe practice), Applied Practice (hands-on competence), Self-Sufficiency (independent, resilient skill), and Mastery & Teaching (able to teach others and operate at community scale). This addendum's companion, Addendum B: Sanitation & Hygiene, runs the same four-stage structure for disease prevention and waste management; the two are meant to be worked through side by side, since most of what actually kills people after a disaster is a sanitation failure that becomes a medical one.

Stage 1: Foundations (Awareness)

Goal: know the core safety facts well enough to not make a medical situation worse, and understand the landscape of what's ahead. This stage is readable in a weekend.

Core Knowledge

The core concept at this stage is triage logic: in a mass-casualty or resource-scarce situation, care isn't given first-come-first-served, it's given by severity and survivability. The standard START (Simple Triage and Rapid Treatment) framework sorts patients into four categories (immediate, delayed, minor, deceased/expectant) based on whether they can walk, whether they're breathing,

and basic circulation and mental status checks. At this stage you don't need to be able to run triage yourself; you need to understand why a first responder might walk past someone who's screaming to treat someone who's silent, since screaming means an open airway and minor injuries are rarely silent. See the Understanding START Triage skill guide for the full four-category framework and decision flow.

Stage 1 Learning Path

Resource	Cost / Format	Notes
START Triage overview (various EMS training sites)	Free, online	Search "START triage algorithm"; multiple state EMS agencies publish the same standardized one-page reference.
Where There Is No Doctor (Hesperian Health Guides)	Free PDF, or ~$30 print	hesperian.org. The standard lay-accessible medical reference already cited in Chapter 5; read the basic first aid chapters first.

Stage 1 Practice Exercises

- **Practice the triage question set:** Given three hypothetical injured people, practice sorting them by START logic (walking wounded, breathing/not breathing, pulse/no pulse) before reading how a trained responder would actually categorize them.

> **Self-Check: Ready for Stage 2?**
>
> You should be able to describe the basic logic of START triage (why silence can be worse than screaming) without looking it up.

Stage 2: Applied Practice (Competent)

Goal: move from knowing the theory to having actually practiced the physical skills under instruction. This stage is hands-on by design and centers on a real, standard certification most households should hold regardless of any other prep.

Applied Practice

- **Get certified in First Aid/CPR/AED:** The American Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED course is the standard entry-level certification: available in-person, blended (online + in-person skills check), or fully online formats, valid for two years, and OSHA/workplace-compliant. Every adult in the household should hold this, not just one designated “medical person.” See the First Aid Basics skill guide for the core skills to practice between certification renewals.
- **Practice wound care hands-on:** Under instruction (the Red Cross course covers this), practice cleaning and dressing a wound, applying a tourniquet correctly, and recognizing when a wound needs more than a bandage.
- **Practice CPR and AED use on a manikin:** Book-knowledge of CPR compression rate and depth doesn’t transfer to muscle memory; the hands-on skills session is the part that actually matters if you’re ever the only person present.

Stage 2 Learning Path

Resource	Cost / Format	Notes
American Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED course	$50–$110 depending on format	redcross.org/local/utah. In-person, blended, or online formats; 2-year certification.
Red Cross BLS (Basic Life Support) course	For anyone wanting the professional-grade version	redcross.org. Slightly more rigorous than standard CPR/AED, standard for healthcare workers; optional but worth it for a household's designated medical lead.
A stocked, tested first aid kit	$50–$150 depending on scope	Practice actually using what's in your kit (not just owning it); a kit you've never opened under pressure is a kit with unknown gaps.

Self-Check: Ready for Stage 3?

You should hold a current Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED certification (or equivalent), and have physically practiced wound dressing and CPR on a manikin under instruction. Reading the material without the certification and hands-on practice is still Stage 1 competency.

Stage 3: Self-Sufficiency (Proficient)

Goal: genuine independence from professional medical care for extended stretches, the actual skill level Chapter 5’s Tier 2 and Tier 3 assume a household has. This stage is a real commitment (multi-

day intensive courses), and produces skills that hold up when there's no hospital to fall back on.

Self-Sufficiency

- **Complete a Wilderness First Responder (WFR) course:** This is the single highest-leverage certification in this addendum for a genuine no-hospital scenario. NOLS's WFR is an 8-to-10-day, 72+ hour course covering patient assessment, musculoskeletal injuries, environmental emergencies, soft tissue injuries, and medical emergencies specifically in contexts without rapid evacuation to a hospital; it's the industry standard for outdoor professionals for exactly this reason. The University of Utah's Emergency Programs (UUCEP) hosts NOLS Wilderness Medicine courses on campus, and a hybrid option (30–40 hours online plus 5 in-person days) is also available if a full 10-day block isn't feasible.
- **Learn basic herbal and home remedies with real limits understood:** Chapter 5's Tier 3 already covers herbal medicine as a real but limited option; treat this stage as building the actual plant-identification and dosing knowledge behind that guidance, not just stocking dried herbs. The Herbal Medicine & the Home Apothecary skill guide covers real plant identification and dosing limits.
- **Build a real triage and stabilization plan for your household:** Beyond the Stage 1 conceptual understanding, practice actually running START triage on simulated patients (a CERT class, covered below, does exactly this) until the categorization logic is fast and automatic. Re-run the scenarios in the Understanding START Triage skill guide until sorting is automatic.
- **Understand illness isolation and quarantine:** A household member's illness can take down the whole household if not isolated correctly; the Isolating a Sick Household Member skill guide covers the actual isolation setup, shared with this addendum's companion, Sanitation & Hygiene.
- **Prepare for medical events with no professional care available:** Two situations deserve deliberate preparation beyond general first aid: a birth that happens without a hospital or midwife reachable, and a dental emergency, which is common, genuinely painful, and rarely covered in general medical prep. See the Pregnancy, Childbirth & Newborn Care and Dental Emergencies & Basic Care skill guides for what to actually do in each.

Stage 3 Learning Path

Resource	Cost / Format	Notes
NOLS Wilderness First Responder (WFR)	~$1,000–$1,300, 8–10 days or hybrid	nols.edu. Check University of Utah Emergency Programs (health.utah.edu/health-kinesiology/uucep) for on-campus course hosting.
School of Natural Healing / HomeGrown Herbalist / The Green Arte	Course fees vary; some offer Utah/Idaho mountain herb walks	Utah-connected herbalism programs pairing plant identification with hands-on harvesting; verify current offerings directly since schedules change.
Where There Is No Doctor / Where There Is No Dentist (full study, not just reference)	Free PDF or ~$30–$45 print each	hesperian.org. By Stage 3, read cover to cover rather than as a reference lookup.

Northern Utah Note

The University of Utah's Emergency Programs office is a genuinely strong regional hub for exactly this kind of advanced training (WFR, EMT, and related wilderness/emergency medicine courses), often held on campus rather than requiring travel out of state. Check health.utah.edu/health-kinesiology/uucep for current course scheduling before looking elsewhere.

Self-Check: Ready for Stage 4?

You should hold a current Wilderness First Responder certification (or be actively enrolled), and be able to run START triage on simulated patients without hesitation. This is the stage where you're the person capable of stabilizing a genuine medical emergency with no hospital available.

Stage 4: Mastery & Teaching (Expert)

Goal: the ability to teach others reliably, coordinate medical response at a community scale, and hold professional-level credentials where they exist. This is the stage Chapter 5's Tier 4 (community medical responder network) actually depends on.

Teaching & Certification

- **Complete CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training:** CERT is free, offered by nearly every Wasatch Front city (Salt Lake City, South Salt Lake, West Valley City, American Fork, and more, usually through the local fire department), and trains civilians in fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations, including hands-on triage practice. This is the single best community-scale on-ramp in this entire addendum, and it's free.

- **Pursue EMT certification:** Utah's EMT course is 120–160 hours (about 150 instruction hours plus 10 clinical hours), offered through the University of Utah, BYU, Davis Technical College, Salt Lake Community College, EMT Utah, and Unified Fire Authority, among others. It requires BLS CPR certification first, and licensing runs through the Utah Bureau of EMS after passing the National Registry exam. This is a serious commitment, appropriate if your household's Tier 4 plan genuinely involves being a trained community medical responder.

- **Pursue a Master Herbalist credential if you've built real plant knowledge:** Programs like the School of Natural Healing's Advanced Herbalist track culminate in a Master Herbalist Certification; registering with the American Herbalists Guild (AHG) is voluntary but adds credibility if you intend to advise others.

Community-Scale Practice

- **Become a CERT team lead or instructor:** CERT programs are built to be taught by graduates; moving into a team-lead or instructor role is the direct mechanism for turning personal training into neighborhood-level capability.

- **Build the medical responder roster described in Chapter 5's Tier 4:** Chapter 5 calls for a neighborhood roster of trained responders and a community medical cache; Stage 4 is where you're capable of organizing, stocking, or teaching from that roster rather than just listing it as a goal.

- **Design for mass-casualty logic, not single-patient care:** The skills that work for treating one household member (Stage 2/3) don't automatically scale; community-scale response means practicing actual triage under simulated multiple-casualty conditions, which CERT and EMT training both specifically cover.

Stage 4 Learning Path

Resource	Cost / Format	Notes
CERT (Community Emergency Response Team)	Free	Search “[your city] CERT training”; Salt Lake City, South Salt Lake, West Valley City, and most Wasatch Front cities run their own free programs through local fire departments.
Utah EMT certification	Course fees vary by provider ($800–$1,500+)	emslicense.utah.gov lists current approved course providers statewide.
American Herbalists Guild (AHG) registration	Membership/registration fee	americanherbalistsguild.com. Voluntary professional registry that adds credibility once you've built real herbal medicine competency.

Self-Check: Have You Actually Arrived?

The real test of Stage 4 isn’t a certification stack; it’s whether you’ve actually run or assisted a CERT drill involving multiple simulated patients, and whether at least one other person in your household or neighborhood now holds First Aid/CPR certification because you helped them get there. If any of the herbalism or advanced credential tracks above fit your interests, completing them is a genuine bonus toward Stage 4 readiness, not a requirement for it.

A Suggested Learning Sequence

As a rough guide, not a requirement:

- **Weeks 1–2:** Stage 1: read the core references and practice the triage question set conceptually.
- **1–3 months:** Stage 2: complete Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED.
- **6–12 months:** Stage 3: complete or enroll in a Wilderness First Responder course, and begin herbal medicine study if of interest.
- **Ongoing:** Stage 4: complete free CERT training, consider EMT certification if your household’s Tier 4 plan calls for it, and start teaching First Aid/CPR to specific people rather than just taking more classes.

At a Glance: Medical Care Deep Dive

A single-page reference for planning purposes. This does not replace the detailed guidance above; use it to see how the four stages scale, and cross-reference against Chapter 5's tiers, which describe what a household needs to have and do rather than how skilled it needs to be.

Stage	Focus	Key Milestone	Primary Resource
Stage 1: Foundations	Core triage logic, no hands-on requirement yet	Can explain basic START triage logic from memory	EMS START triage references, Hesperian's Where There Is No Doctor
Stage 2: Applied Practice	Hands-on certification and low-stakes repetition	Holds current Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED certification	American Red Cross
Stage 3: Self-Sufficiency	Independent, certified skill for a no-hospital scenario	Holds or is enrolled in Wilderness First Responder	NOLS Wilderness First Responder
Stage 4: Mastery & Teaching	Teaching others, community/professional scale	Completed CERT; has taught someone First Aid/CPR who has since certified independently	CERT, Utah EMT certification