Disaster Readiness for Hospital-Based Nurses: Preparing for Uncertain Times

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Hospital Preparedness

Are We Ready?

• “How prepared are we?”

• Hospitals throughout the United States have a disaster plan as a requirement of state licensure or complying with a JCAHO standard.

• The key question concerning these plans is, do they meet the needs of the facility and the community? Too often, they do not.

• The emphasis is on developing appropriate levels of capabilities to address a wide range of terrorist attacks, disaster scenarios and public health emergencies.

• What does this mean for Nurses?
• Surge Capacity
• HICS/Incident Command System
• PODs for Vaccination/Treatment
• Barriers to Response
• Allocation of Resources
• Altered Standards of Care
Surge Capacity

• “Healthcare system’s ability to manage a sudden or rapidly progressive influx of patients at a given point in time”.

• “Surge capacity” is one of our biggest hospital/public health emergency preparedness weaknesses.

• Supplies, equipment, staff, and space to treat patients -- solutions to these problems are often lacking.

• *Nurses are critical* to surge capacity and need to know how to participate in a response.
U.S. Emergency Departments functioning in disaster mode on a daily basis
Altered Standards of Care

- Crisis Standards for Care, 2012
Hospital Disaster Preparedness

• “You don’t know what it will be but you know it will be coming”.
• Mass shooting/active shooter, tornado, hurricane, outbreak of life-threatening disease, plant explosion, or even a terrorist attack.
• Survival rates of victims depend on the ability of hospitals to handle the sudden influx of mass casualties and how well prepared they are to handle such emergency situations.
Hospital Emergency and Disaster Preparedness
Emergency Preparedness Requirements for Medicare and Medicaid Participating Providers and Suppliers (CMS-3178-P)
What’s unique about disaster/ public health emergency nursing?

- Triage (greatest good…)
- Allocation of Scarce Resources
- Decontamination
- Use of PPE (Critical for Nurses, eg. SARS)
- Event Management
- ICS
- Crisis Leadership & Managerial Decision Making
Concerns for Hospital Based Nurses
Joplin Tornado

- Joplin, Missouri Tornado Destroys Hospital
- Tornado flattens St. John's Regional Medical Center.
- ABC news 5/23/2011
Hurricane Sandy
Boston Bombings
H1N1 Novel Influenza A

- Spring 2009
Pandemic Flu Planning

The Great Pandemic
THE UNITED STATES IN 1918–1919

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Pandemic Influenza

Image of a chicken and various medical images related to the pandemic.
Importance of Personal and Family Preparedness

- Importance of Personal and Family Preparedness as the foundation for organizational preparedness.
- Develop strategies for teaching staff to become personally prepared.
- Support activities that enhance staff collegiality & collaboration.
- Sponsor 100% Readiness Unit Activities, e.g. Work-buddy System, etc.
- Enhance unit level preparedness, stock adequate PPE.
Disaster Nursing
Willingness to come to work.
Willingness to stay at work.
Willingness to protect your patients from harm.

Willingness to respond to a disaster or major public health emergency is dependent upon the clinician’s:

- Sense of clinical competence
- Perception of personal safety
- Confidence in the safety of family and significant others
The Nurse Leader’s Role in Managing Disasters & Public Health Emergencies:
Norms of Health Care Professionalism

- In addition to the values that guide planning and response at the leadership level, the norms of health care professionalism that are relevant to clinical decision making during a disaster/PHE/pandemic including:
  - Ethical duty to provide care and non-abandonment
  - Respect for persons
  - Duty to benefit and to prevent harm
  - Fairness
Personal Responsibility: Use of PPE

- SARS: Nurses affected
- Improper use of PPE
- Confusion surrounding the ‘wave’ nature of the outbreak
- Participate in drills and tabletop exercises
- Understand the proper use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Know the proper don and doffing of PPE
Key Points

Disasters are increasing in their frequency and intensity.

Disasters create uncertainty for the U.S. Health Care System.

A national nursing workforce is needed with the knowledge and skills to respond to any type of disaster or public health emergency in a timely and appropriate manner.

Nurses may be first responders or more likely, hospital based first receivers.
Summary

- Disaster Nursing is a PATIENT SAFETY and QUALITY of CARE ISSUE.
- Personal & Family Preparedness is critical.
- Keeping Nurses SAFE keeps patients SAFE.
Resources for Nurses

Disaster Nursing and Emergency Preparedness
For Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Terrorism and Other Hazards
Tener Goodwin Veenema

ReadyRN
Handbook for Disaster Nursing and Emergency Preparedness
Tener Goodwin Veenema