Development of a Disaster Preparedness Interprofessional Education (IPE) Program for Health Profession Students

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**Introduction**

- Despite numerous attacks and threats both in the US and around the world, there is no standardized disaster preparedness curriculum for health profession students.

- This project is the development and implementation of an IPE disaster preparedness curriculum with both a mandatory component and additional training as an elective at Thomas Jefferson University (TJU) in Philadelphia.

- Upon completion of the elective component, students are Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hospital Emergency Response Team (HERT) certified and become part of the hospital’s disaster response and decontamination team.

**Results**

- Program directors were very supportive of the need to have disaster preparedness training for their students.

- In addition, the students also believed that this type of training was important.

- Pretests identified significant knowledge gaps in disaster preparedness and response, and more than half of the 386 surveyed students wanted to volunteer to be part of a disaster response team, requiring additional didactic and simulation training.

- A HERT team composed entirely of students living on campus was developed and on call for the 2017 July 4th festivities in Philadelphia.

**Methods**

- The disaster preparedness curricula from the various health profession programs at Jefferson and national program recommendations or requirements for disaster preparedness training were reviewed.

- Surveys were sent to program directors at Jefferson to gauge their interest in disaster preparedness training.

- A curriculum was developed with both didactic and experiential learning components, including participation in a large scale disaster exercise.

**Willingness to Volunteer for HERT Team**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Students</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Students</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>84</td>
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<td>Totals</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>62</td>
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**Conclusions/Future Directions**

- IPE disaster preparedness training is widely supported by both health profession program faculty directors and students.

- Significant gaps currently exist for health profession student training in this area.

- Recent natural disasters and terrorist attacks as well as the current threats of attacks further support the need for a national standard IPE program on disaster preparedness.

**Contact**

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