


Competencies for Emergency Preparedness

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Emergency preparedness

- an extension of the mission of public health *to promote physical and mental health and prevent disease, injury, and disability*
 - Anticipating potential emergencies
 - Developing appropriate plans
 - Developing needed relationships
 - Practicing so it is familiar territory


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Essential public health services

- Emergency response can be seen as good public health under unusual circumstances
- Grounding in the basics makes response more effective



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Public Health Preparedness: 7 Core Capacities

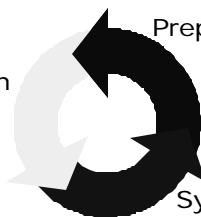
- Workforce
- Information Systems
- Communication
- Epidemiology/surveillance
- Laboratory
- Policy and Evaluation
- Preparedness and Response

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Public health infrastructure

Data and
Information



Prepared Workforce


Systems and
Relationships

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Emergency and Disasters

- **Emergency:** a sudden occurrence demanding immediate action; may be due to epidemics, technological catastrophes, or strife [from] natural or man-made causes
- **Disaster:** occurrence that causes damage . . . on a scale sufficient to warrant . . . response from outside the affected areas

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Core Competencies for Public Health Workers

- Developed at CUSON with the support of the CDC; training developed in partnership with CU Mailman School of Public Health



ALL public health workers should be able to:

- **IDENTIFY & LOCATE** the emergency plan
- **DESCRIBE** the role of Public Health
- **DESCRIBE** the Chain of Command
- **DESCRIBE & DEMONSTRATE** functional role
- **RECOGNIZE** deviations from the norm
- **IDENTIFY** limits to own authority
- **DESCRIBE** communication roles
- **DEMONSTRATE** communication equipment
- **APPLY** creative problem solving skills

Core competencies in emergency preparedness

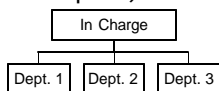
- **Describe** the public health role in emergency response in a range of emergencies that might arise.
 - E.g. *"This department provides surveillance, investigation and public information in disease outbreaks and collaborates with other agencies in biological, environmental, and weather emergencies."*

PH responsibilities from *Public Health in America*

- Prevent epidemics and spread of disease
- Protect against environmental hazards
- Prevent injuries
- Promote and encourage health behaviors
- Assure the quality and accessibility of health services
- Respond to disasters and assist communities in recovery

Core competencies 2

- **Describe** the chain of command in emergency response
- **Identify and locate** the agency emergency response plan (or the pertinent portion of the plan).



Where is the emergency plan for Your Agency?

The plan should be:

- In an accessible location at work
- Reviewed by each employee on a regular basis
- Updated at least annually
- Practiced regularly

Core competencies 3

- **Describe** his/her functional role(s) in emergency response and **demonstrate** his/her role(s) in regular drills.
- **Demonstrate** correct use of all communication equipment used for emergency communication (phone, fax, radio, etc.).

Which employees are needed during emergency or disaster?

- Some emergencies and disasters could require the mobilization of MOST or ALL public health employees.
- Therefore, **ALL** public health workers need to learn what their roles may be in these situations.

Core competencies 4

- **Describe** communication role(s) in emergency response:
 - Within agency
 - Media
 - General public
 - Personal (family, neighbors)

Communication with Your Family

Your family may be concerned, involved and/or have their routines changed.

Do you have a:

- Family Disaster Plan
- Personal Emergency Plan

Remember.....

Make provisions for:

- Child(ren)
- Spouse/Partner
- Parents
- Pets
- Others



Core competencies 5



- **Identify** limits to own knowledge/ skill/authority and **identify** key system resources for referring matters that exceed these limits.

Some examples

LIMITS TO OWN SKILLS OR AUTHORITY

- Communication with media
- Legal authority
- Supervision of others
- Allocation of resources
- Clinical skills or decision making
- Policy decision

KEY SYSTEM RESOURCES

- Agency chain of command
- Web resources
- Logistics Officer
- Policy and procedure manual
- Disaster plan / protocols



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Core competencies 6

- **Apply** creative problem solving and flexible thinking to unusual challenges within his/her functional responsibilities and **evaluate** effectiveness of all actions taken.



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Core competencies 7

- **Recognize** deviations from the norm that might indicate an emergency and **describe** appropriate action (e.g. communicate clearly within the chain of command).



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Additional competencies for professionals



- Demonstrate readiness to apply skills to a range of emergency situations during regular drills
 - access, use, interpretation of surveillance data
 - access to and use of lab resources
 - access to and use of science-based investigation protocols and risk assessment
 - selection/use of appropriate protective equipment



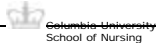
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Professionals 2



- Maintain regular communication with partner professionals in other agencies involved in emergency response
 - includes contributing to effective community wide response through leadership, team building, negotiation and conflict resolution



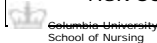
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Professionals 3



- Participate in continuing education to maintain up to date knowledge in areas relevant to emergency response
 - emerging infectious diseases
 - hazardous materials
 - diagnostic tests
 - risk communication



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Additional competencies for leaders

- **Describe** the chain of command and management system (“incident command system” or similar protocol) for emergency response in the jurisdiction.



Leaders 2



- **Communicate** public health information/roles/capacities/legal authority accurately to all emergency response partners, during planning, drills and actual emergencies
 - includes contributing to effective community-wide response through leadership, team building, negotiation and conflict resolution.

Leaders 3



- **Maintain** regular communication with emergency response partners (includes maintaining a current directory of partners and identifying appropriate methods for contact in emergencies).

Leaders 4



- **Assure** that the agency (or agency unit) has a written, updated plan for major categories of emergencies that respects the culture of the community.



Leaders 6



- **Evaluate** every emergency response drill/emergency response to identify needed internal/external improvements
- **Assure** that knowledge/skill gaps identified through emergency response planning, drills and evaluation are filled.

Remember . . .

- competent workers
- can deliver essential public health services
- which means that emergency services are effective and
- people and communities are protected



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