



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY State University of New York

**University at Albany
Center for Public Health
Preparedness**

Grand Rounds Series

**Adapting Standards of Care
Under Extreme Conditions**

June 12, 2008

Speakers

- **Kristine Gebbie, DrPH, RN - Elizabeth Standish Gill Professor of Nursing and Director of the Center for Health Policy at Columbia University School of Nursing**
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WHITE PAPER:

Adapting Standards of Care Under Extreme Conditions: Guidance for Professionals During Disasters, Pandemics and Other Extreme Emergencies

MARCH 2008

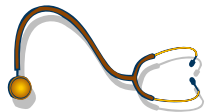
Purpose – The Question

- Decisions about care during extreme circumstances:
 - Changes in resources available
 - Practice in unusual settings
 - Unfamiliar settings or patients



Why This Concern

- Fear expressed by providers
 - I'll be held to a standard I can't meet
 - I'll be charged with malpractice
 - I'm not really ready for a disaster



Emergency Preparedness

- Planning ahead increases the potential for:
 - Minimizing damage
 - Using resources wisely
 - Protecting responders from physical and mental harm

Emergency Preparedness

- Nothing in this broadcast replaces:
 - The individual responsibility of the health professional to be ready for emergencies
 - The responsibility of every health organization to plan for and practice emergency response

It All Begins With You

- A personal and professional plan that includes
 - Essential supplies, medications, documents
 - Communication information for family
 - Backup support for dependents if you must work during an event



PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS

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Overview

- 1 Importance of Your Emergency Plans
- 2 Your Family Disaster Plan
- 3 Your Personal Emergency Plan
- 4 Testing Your Preparedness Plans

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Planning On a Larger Scale

- National Incident Management System

- The overall approach to

- Planning
- Mitigation
- Response
- Recovery



Planning On a Larger Scale

- National Incident Management System

- The structure on which integration of activities is built
 - Interagency collaboration at all levels
 - Interstate provision of support through EMACs
 - Decision making during events

Health Care

- Planning and practicing for emergencies is required by the Joint Commission
- States require planning and practice



Reminder

- During an emergency, the *circumstances* have changed

- Your competencies have *not* changed

- Not the standards of care have *not* changed



Legal Basis

- Scope and Standards for Professional Practice

- Professional Code of Ethics

- National Guidelines on Care in Emergencies



Challenges to Meeting Expectations

- Loss of essentials
 - No supplies delivered
 - No power or water
- Shortage of workers
 - Unable or unwilling to work



Challenges to Meeting Expectations

- Sudden increase in number of patients
 - Injured or fearful
- Relocation
 - Evacuation of hospital or LTC to unfamiliar site



The Ethics of Emergencies

- Utilitarian framework
 - The greatest good for the greatest number
 - A sharp shift from our usual focus on each individual



The Ethics of Emergencies

- Transparent planning and clear communication to the public are essential process values that support this approach



What are the Priorities?

- Maximize worker and patient safety
 - Do not add additional injury to the burden of the response
- Maintain airway and breathing, circulation and loss of blood
 - Some other routines can wait
- Maintain or establish infection control
 - Including ongoing treatment such as for TB

What Might be Left for Later

- Routine care activities
- Administration of oral medications
- Extensive documentation of care
- Maintenance of complete privacy and confidentiality
- Elective procedures



Who Does This Apply To?

- Any licensed health care professional
 - At the immediate site of the disaster
 - At your usual place of work
 - At your own facility, but at a relocated site
- If you are a volunteers



A Word About Volunteering

- No SUV's! (Spontaneous Unauthorized Volunteers)
- Respond only when you know where you are going and to whom you will report
 - Join your local medical reserve corps or other organized team
 - Register with your state's Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP)
 - Participate in training and exercises to keep your skills current

What do Agencies Need to Consider in Advance?

- Anticipate the inclusion of volunteers into care teams:
 - Coordinate access to volunteers with local public health and emergency management agencies.
 - Establish a mechanism for credentialing of volunteer staff consistent with ESAR-VHP.

Most Health Professionals

- Will not be at a 'scene' doing battlefield triage
- Will not be in an emergency department doing decontamination
- Will be giving nursing, medical or other care
 - Under unusual circumstances
 - Within Incident Command Structure rather than usual chain of command

Special Notes to Health Professionals

- Ensure that health institutions and professionals are included in all planning for legal declarations of emergencies
- Ensure that legal counsels to organizations that employ health professionals are included in community planning.
- During an emergency, record changes in expectations about care, and the impact on patients and community.

What do Agencies Need to Consider in Advance?

- Develop descriptions of potential reconfigurations of clinician teams or physical resources



What do Agencies Need to Consider in Advance?

- Ensure that emergency plans include capacity for rapid education including any changes in protocols needed to:
 - Maintain a regular inventory of resources specific to potential emergencies
 - Include human resources and staff development personnel in planning so they prepare templates in advance

What do Agencies Need to Consider in Advance?

- Include opportunities for professional decision-making about adapting standards in drills and exercises on a regular basis.



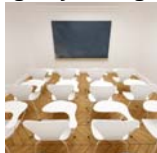
During an Emergency Every Agency Should

- Distribute daily information on staffing expectations, including role of volunteers, to at least:
 - Inform your staff how volunteer credentials are being established, and
 - Specify any unusual expectations, such as delegation to unlicensed personnel.



During an Emergency Every Agency should

- If legal changes such as governor's declaration of emergency has been invoked, communicate this to staff.
- Provide just-in-time training specific to the event, including any changes in protocols.



When the Emergency is Over

- Participate in post-event evaluation
 - Within the organization
 - Across the community
- Do a psychosocial needs assessment for those responding, and arrange assistance if indicated.
- Return to pre-event status as quickly and smoothly as reasonable.

What Do Health Care Professionals Need to Do in Advance?

- Prepare your personal/professional emergency plan
- Participate in continuing education on emergency preparedness
- Participate in emergency drills and exercises



What Do You Need To Do in Advance?

- Learn the legal basis for professional care, and the legal structure of your state regarding health professionals during emergencies.
- Provide clear information to any employer or any volunteer organization where you are enrolled about any limitations on availability or any special skills (e.g., experience with community or emergency triage) applicable to emergency conditions.

During an Event

- Use your professional competence to provide the best care possible given the resources and physical conditions under which you are working.
- Use assigned or announced information resources to clarify any changes in protocols or staff roles.



During an Event

- Use available rapid training to update readiness to respond to the specific event.
- Communicate difficulties responding as expected through the assigned chain of command as quickly as possible.

Post-Event

- Participate in post-event evaluation.
- Do a psychosocial needs assessment for self and family, and seek assistance if indicated.
- Update your personal plan if indicated.
- Participate in activities to facilitate return to pre-event status.

Thank you to the ANA working group

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