Emergency Preparedness: Prevention, Response and Recovery

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Module 4: Emergencies: Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery

Part 4: Recovery
Objective

• Assess the emergency recovery process and the challenges therein for different types of emergencies.
Outline

- Recovery Challenges
- Learning Lessons
  - Governmental Response
  - Individual/Community Response
Recovery Challenges

- Housing
- Insurance
- Ethical Issues
- Mental Health
- Vulnerable Populations
- Rebuilding
Housing

- To rebuild or not
- Influx of emergency contractors from outside the community
- Displaced populations
- Emotional ties to place/community
Insurance Challenges

- National Flood Insurance Program
- Home Owner’s Insurance
- Business Property Insurance
- Claims Process
- Documentation
Ethical Issues

• Research ethics
• Altered standards of care
• Access to resources
Mental Health

- Community services may be suspended
- Red Cross capacity concerns
- Social stigma
- Physical displacement prioritized
Vulnerable Populations

- Housing
- Communication
- Social Services
- Displacement
- Mental Health
Outline

• Recovery Challenges

• Learning Lessons
  – Governmental Response
  – Individual/Community Response
Learning Lessons - Governmental Response

• Hot Washes
• Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Plan (HSEEP)
• After Action Reports (AAR)
• Volunteer Surveys
• Root cause analysis
• Facilitated lookbacks
• Context + Mechanism = Outcome (CMO)
• Critical event registries
Example: H1N1 What We Learned

• Successful public vaccination clinics:
  – Defined priority groups
  – Communicated with the public
  – Maintained adequate staffing
  – Established community partnerships, and
  – Maintained flexibility

Outline

• Recovery Challenges

• Learning Lessons
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  – Individual/Community Response
Psychological Consequences of Disaster

• Any scale of disaster results in physical and psychological damage
Impact Phase Reactions

• Stressors in this phase that may have psychological consequences:
  • Threat to life and encounter with death
  • Feelings of helplessness and powerlessness
  • Loss
  • Dislocation
  • Feeling responsible
  • Inescapable horror
  • Human malevolence
Immediate Post-Disaster Reactions

- Numbness
- Denial or shock
- Flashbacks and nightmares
- Grief reactions to loss
- Anger
- Despair
- Sadness
- Hopelessness
Recovery Phase Reactions

• Significant longer term emotional needs become apparent

• Continued media exposure to trauma brings back feelings from initial exposure

• Hesitation to express feelings of distress, concern, dissatisfaction

• Physical health symptoms of emotional distress appear
Normal Psychological Reactions

- Upsetting memories
- Flash backs
- Bad dreams
- Anxiety and fear
- Depression
- Aggressive behavior
- Self-blame and guilt
- Restlessness/sleeplessness
## Distress vs. Dysfunction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distress</th>
<th>Dysfunction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dysfunction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Panic attacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irritability</td>
<td>Infantile emotions in adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Immobilizing depression</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression and/or Grief</td>
<td>Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fear, phobia, phobic avoidance</td>
<td>- PTS taken to an extreme level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Posttraumatic stress (PTS)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Impulsiveness</td>
<td>Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk-taking</td>
<td>Antisocial acts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excessive eating</td>
<td>Abuse of others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol/drug use</td>
<td>Immobility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compensatory sexuality</td>
<td>Self-medication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sleep disturbance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family discord</td>
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<tr>
<td>1000 yard stare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyper startle</td>
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<td>Hypersensitivity to cues</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Physical</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tachycardia or bradycardia</td>
<td>Chest pain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Headaches</td>
<td>Persistent irregular heartbeats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyperventilation</td>
<td>Recurrent dizziness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Muscle spasms</td>
<td>Seizure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychogenic sweating</td>
<td>Recurrent headaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue/exhaustion</td>
<td>Blood in vomit, urine, stool, sputum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigestion, nausea, vomiting</td>
<td>Collapse/loss of consciousness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Numbness/paralysis (especially of arm, leg, face)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inability to speak/understand speech</td>
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</table>
Need for Additional Intervention

- Disorientation - dazed, memory loss, inability to give date or time, location, recall events of the past 24 hours
- Inability to care for self - not eating, bathing, or changing clothes; inability to manage activities of daily living
- Suicidal or homicidal thoughts or plans
- Problematic use of alcohol or drugs
- Domestic violence, child abuse, or elder abuse
- Any common reaction may require intervention if it interferes with daily functioning
Learning Lessons - Community Resilience

Four Initial Intervention Goals:

- Identify those in need of immediate medical attention
- Provide supportive assistance and protection from harm
- Facilitate connecting survivors with family and friends
- Provide information about the status of the disaster site and immediate law enforcement efforts
Community Resilience

Once safety is established, the following four intervention goals should be targeted:

- Alleviate distress through supportive listening, providing comfort, and empathy
- Facilitate effective problem-solving of immediate concerns
- Recognize and address pre-existing psychiatric or other health conditions in the context of the demands of the current stressor
- Provide psycho-educational information regarding post-trauma reactions and coping strategies
Summary

• Recovery from disasters may be a long process with numerous challenges both physical and psychosocial.

• There are numerous evidence-based strategies than can be implemented to learn from the response as well as increase community resilience.