



MEETING ABSTRACTS

Resiliency of a US Pacific Island Territory with a Type 1 EMT

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Background/Introduction: The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), a chain of 14 Pacific islands with a population of around 50,000 and a United States territory, experienced two major typhoons exceeding 150 mph/240 kmph in three years. The resiliency of the people of the CNMI is evident, and has been supplemented through support from international Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs). As a US territory, support is available from the United States federal government and international partners, but an island territory far from the US mainland, the CNMI requires strong local emergency response capacity.

Objectives: To describe:

- How the CNMI health system conducted an environmental scan to identify and address gaps in out-patient support in disasters;
- How the health system improved and expanded its capacity to respond to emergencies with a significant impact on the community's health; and
- How leveraging the integration of clinical and public health capacities contributed to the development of a multidisciplinary local Type 1 EMT in the CNMI.

Method/Description: The CNMI brought together key local agencies involved in emergency response. Because of multiple recent disaster response efforts, agencies had deep knowledge and experience, and gaps were easily identified.

Results/Outcomes: The territory's experience with international EMTs guided the creation of a local EMT in the CNMI, engaging local agencies, physicians, nurses, and public health and preparedness staff from the territory's health system to establish an EMT for local and potentially for regional response.

Conclusion: Building local capacity using multi-sectoral agencies and multi-disciplinary individuals improves health system resiliency in health emergency response.

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