

The objectives of this presentation are to: (1) familiarize participants with the INCMCE; and (2) demonstrate a representative module of the INCMCE curriculum.

The first completed module, called “The Tipping Point”, is designed to help nurses identify possible changes in care that occur when mass casualties are received, describe differing triage principles, and discuss the psychological support needed during and after a mass-casualty event. The modules have been designed using the “How People Learn” framework, a format that was developed after a review of the educational literature sponsored by the National Research Council (USA).

Four of the six proposed modules are in development. A complete set of modules will provide nurses with the resources needed to meet the international competencies.

Drawing on the experiences of nurses internationally allows for a wealth of testimonials and resources from which all can learn in an online format interactively.

**Keywords:** education; emergency; international; International Nursing Coalition for Mass-Casualty Education (INCMCE); modules; nurses; online

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### Preparing Volunteer Nurses for Public Health Emergencies

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Several grants have been received to develop an online curriculum for nurses in emergency preparedness using the competencies developed by the International Nursing Coalition for Mass-Casualty Education (INCMCE).

This presentation will provide data to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of learning programs designed to educate nurses volunteering for service in their local community Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) or statewide volunteer nurses. Two types of learning programs will be compared: (1) a face-to-face version; and (2) an online version, both of which will be designed using the principles of the national How People Learn (HPL) framework.

Effectiveness of the learning programs will be determined by: (1) mastering course content; (2) following International Nursing Coalition for Mass Casualty (INCMCE) competencies; (3) incorporating principles of the HPL framework; (4) promoting course completion; and (5) increasing clinical confidence. Efficiency will be measured by cost per student, time spent in completion, and convenience for the student.

Additional aims of the project will be to define user characteristics that predict selection of and effective/efficient completion of learning programs, and to determine the adequacy of technology integration in learning emergency response content. The long-term objective of this study is to provide quality educational materials for nurses volunteering in their local and regional communities, thereby improving the quality of health following emergency public health events in the United States.

**Keywords:** assessment; emergency preparedness; management; nurses; training

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### Free Papers Theme 12: Tsunami-1

### Free Papers Theme 13: Disaster Planning -1

### Theme 9: Infectious Diseases and Epidemics

*Chair: Frederick M. Burkle, Jr., MD, MPH*

### Caring About Healthcare Workers as First Responders: Building Research Capacity to Enhance Resiliency through Emergency Preparedness Planning

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Traditionally, healthcare workers (HCWs) have not been included as first responders in chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) response policy and training. Recent terrorism and natural disasters have highlighted the need to include HCWs in CBRN emergency preparedness plans. Using the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreaks as a model, this four-year study, funded by the CBRN Research Technology Initiative, focuses on front-line HCW response, preparedness, and resilience for coping with disaster scenarios.

The review of existing literature in three distinct areas includes: (1) support mechanisms for HCW as first responders; (2) impacts on HCWs involved in SARS and other outbreaks; and (3) mechanisms for adoption of the best practices of communication and organization. A survey is being conducted currently of civilian and military HCWs focusing on family and health impacts of first-responder roles. In conjunction with the survey data, a third component of the study entails identification, risk assessment, and analysis of hospital employee support mechanisms during an outbreak. Evaluations of emergency plans for three hospitals, and focus group data from emergency team members, are being used to identify gaps in support mechanisms for front-line HCWs and develop policy recommendations for a risk management framework for public health emergency preparedness. Additional analyses examine personnel policy and work-family conflict from a gender perspective.

It is clear that the SARS outbreak in Canada has provided a stimulus for increased attention to HCWs as first responders in infectious disease outbreaks, however communications and policy recommendations are needed to ensure these groups are supported in their roles.

**Keywords:** Canada; chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear (CBRN); disasters; healthcare workers (HCWs); infectious diseases; outbreaks; preparedness; response; terrorism

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