

500 surgeries, 3,000 minor surgical interventions, and 15,000 check-ups by specialists were performed annually. Patients requiring more advanced care are transferred to a hospital in Kosovska Mitrovica, located 40 kilometers north.

Ethnic intolerance and a lack of trust between the Albanian and Serb populations have necessitated the development of parallel medical institutions in a relatively small area.

Keywords: ethical distrust; ethnic intolerance; hospitals; Kosovo; medical staff

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(97) Triage Decisions of Prehospital and Hospital Emergency Healthcare Providers, Using a Multiple Casualty Scenario in Kocaeli, Turkey

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Objective: This study was planned to examine the accuracy of triage decision-making among emergency physicians and to determine whether triage training was necessary.

Methods: A self-administered questionnaire, including a multiple-casualty scenario that required each casualty to be prioritized for treatment, was administered to 110 emergency physicians working for prehospital and hospital emergency services in Kocaeli, where an earthquake occurred in 1999. The scenario has been adapted to START from another study using the SIEVE algorithm (with permission). Seventeen case scenarios found to be appropriate for START algorithm were studied. The differences between personal/professional characteristics and triage decisions were analyzed using a Chi-Square Test.

Results: Accurate triage decision rates of the emergency physicians were between 83.6 and 90.0% for four immediate casualties, 26.4 and 78.2% for seven urgent casualties, 70.9 and 91.8% for four delayed casualties, and 82.7 and 97.3% for two dead cases. The triage rates with the highest accuracy and inaccuracy were obtained for dead and urgent cases, respectively. Personal and professional characteristics (age, professional, pre-hospital, and hospital emergency experience) were found to be related statistically for five cases ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusions: Emergency physicians tend to “under triage” patients. The discrepancy of the accuracy rates in urgent casualties indicates the necessity of improving decision-making in training programs. This improvement will be helpful in reducing violations of important duties of “justice” and of “do not harm” among the emergency physicians. Consequently, triage training programs should be periodically updated.

Keywords: physicians; prehospital; training; triage; Turkey

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Oral Presentations—Theme 5: Hot Topics

Session 1

Chairs: TBA

Informatics Solutions for Emergency Planning and Response

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Early informatics contributions to the emergency planning and response agenda have focused largely on surveillance and detection of threats. A broader assessment of possible informatics contributions reveals that informatics also can contribute to increasing efficiency during a disaster response, as well as provide a tele-presence for remote medical caregivers. This presentation will explore current and future roles of informatics in emergency preparedness and response.

Data management has long been the focus of informatics, but never with the special challenges brought about during disaster situations. Tracking of victims, electronic health records, and supply inventory are only a few of the contributions that informatics can provide during disasters. Modeling of response resources can provide the parameters for more effective decision-making. Public reporting can be provided more accurately if the information is received in a timely fashion. Databases provide the infrastructure for the reporting of data that can later be mined to determine the effectiveness of planning and response efforts.

Some disaster situations require medical expertise that is not readily available in the field. Having a telemedicine infrastructure would link the needed expertise to those in the field who require referral advice. Being able to link to the patient's medication history and records would further extend the provision of better health care.

Informatics also can play a strong role in the design of databases for volunteers. Having volunteers registered and credentialed prior to an emergency event would allow for expedient care. The intersection of informatics and emergency response provides the most effective available response.

Keywords: data reporting; databases; emergency planning and response; informatics; tracking

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Emergency Telecommunications for European Citizens

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Emergency Telecommunications cover communications from citizens to authorities, between authorities, from authorities to citizens and between affected citizens in cases of emergencies or disasters.

The presentation covers the existing situation in all these areas from a citizen's perspective. More specifically, it covers the situation concerning the single European emergency call number (112), the ongoing projects in the field of communications between authorities and the future of early warning and alarm for citizens in distress.