

2. Center For Disaster Medicine, New York Medical College, Valhalla/NY/United States of America

Study/Objective: To explore methods of enhancing the self-efficacy of emergency medical responders performing clinical skills in austere environments.

Background: Numerous medical organizations descend upon global disasters to offer assistance where the health care and emergency response infrastructure is often fragmented and unreliable. Many civilian clinicians who volunteer to participate on such teams have never provided care in environments with dynamic, unpredictable, or hazardous conditions. The psychological and physiological stressors imposed on these clinicians may affect their ability to render care effectively in these settings.

Methods: We created an 8-hour, continuing education course on rendering aid in the austere environment that was piloted twice using paramedics and physicians who were affiliated with law enforcement or military tactical response teams. The course consisted of three hours of didactic instruction and five hours of various training evolutions using hi-fidelity patient simulators and trained medical actors. The training evolutions involved clinical skills, techniques for rendering care in sensory deprivation and overload conditions, and a final training exercise involving realistic situations in which skills were applied and evaluated.

Results: The two pilot course audiences' consisted of clinicians who had previous exposure to rendering various types of combat casualty care. In spite of this previous training and real world experience, the participants reported feeling better prepared to act clinically following immersion in simulated training environments that could realistically simulate hazardous environmental conditions.

Conclusion: Simulation of severe environmental conditions is an essential component of the education of clinicians who have roles rendering medical care in austere environments. A main feature of this training was the sensitization of the participant to external stressors and the ability of that participant to apply cognitive and psychomotor skills in less time and with more reliability throughout the training. Future training of clinicians deploying to harsh environments should consider the use of these training modalities.

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A Table Top, Mass Casualty Incident Simulation to Identify Emergency Department Flow and Capacity Issues

Manu Madbok

Emergency Department, Children's Minnesota, Minneapolis/MN/United States of America

Study/Objective: Table-top simulation to identify gaps in a hospital's preparedness and help assess its ability to respond to a Mass-Casualty Incident (MCI).

Background: Mass-Casualty Incidents (MCI) occur throughout the country, and hospitals traditionally utilize disaster drills with volunteers as simulated patients, which is a very time-consuming

and person-intensive process. The Hospital Surge Evaluation Tool is a table-top simulation designed to identify gaps in a hospital's preparedness and assess its ability to respond to a MCI. **Methods:** The ASPR/RAND assessment tools were used to simulate a MCI from a bomb explosion. The exercise was designed to test whether the hospital can rapidly shift into disaster mode, clear space in the Emergency Department (ED), create space in the inpatient units or create new spaces, and effectively coordinate with the command center. Based on criteria entered into a generator tool, a random list of patients "presenting" to the ED is created with increasing numbers and acuity "presenting" every 15 minutes for 60 minutes. The ED staff (physician, charge nurse) assessed each patient on the list as red, yellow, or green and determined the appropriate level of care needed. If the patient needed to be transferred to an inpatient floor (med/surg or ICU), the ED called the command center. Using real-time, current census & staffing, the command center (incident command, bed/staff tracking) determined the appropriate destination (floor, ICU, OR) that the patient could be moved to and informed the ED. Incident command also had to determine other resources like staffing & supplies and calling the appropriate departments.

Results: The simulation was useful, but there were some assumptions and limitations that would deter it to happen as smoothly or as quickly. Patients would likely be kept in the ED longer. There are some limitations to the tool and manual entry is needed.

Conclusion: Table-top simulation exercises simulating MCI helped identify ED flow issues and creative solutions.

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Challenges in Conducting Disaster Simulations

Ali Haedar¹, Indro Murwoko², Theodora E. Yuliana³, Arif N. Kholis⁴, Rahmawati Husein⁴, Corona Rintawan⁵, Zuhdiyah Nibayati⁵

1. Emergency Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Brawijaya, Malang/Indonesia
2. Ministry of Health Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta/Indonesia
3. National Disaster Management Authority, Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta/Indonesia
4. Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center, Indonesia, Yogyakarta/Indonesia
5. Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center, Indonesia, Lamongan/Indonesia

Study/Objective: The objective of this study is to identify gaps and shortfalls of disaster simulation, in preparedness and coordination of multiple-jurisdictional integrated response, to a national catastrophic event, testing plans, critical response and recovery functions.

Background: The emergency management could include Preparation & Protection, Mitigation Respond, and Recovery. While the purpose of disaster simulation are to assess and validate our capabilities and role in the communications, critical resource logistics and distribution, mass care, medical surge, citizen evacuation and shelter-in-place, emergency public