

MEETING ABSTRACTS**Use of Mobile Health Units for Primary Health Care in Disasters**

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Background/Introduction: As disasters disrupt health systems and create additional health needs, Mobile Health Units (MHU) are deployed to help cover primary health care (PHC) needs. However, MHUs have been critiqued for being logistically burdensome and poorly adapted to dominating health needs. Guidelines exist, including WHO Classification for Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) Type 1 mobile, but the usefulness of MHUs in disasters has been poorly studied.

Objectives: To explore the use of MHUs for PHC in disasters and identify key characteristics as described in the literature.

Method/Description: A scoping review was conducted following framework by Arksey and O'Malley using thematic content analysis. Twenty-six bibliographic databases and websites were

screened for white and grey literature on the use of MHUs in disasters published from 2000–2021.

Results/Outcomes: The search resulted in 24 reviews and operational reports, highlighting nine themes. While MHUs were reported to improve health service delivery, 16 documents highlighted challenges related to logistics, organization, and coordination. Seven publications described cooperation with local authorities and stakeholders to help improve relevancy of care by adapting service provision to health needs. Several studies highlighted the need for a functioning referral system and inclusion of local and culturally sensitive staff.

Conclusion: Findings of this study highlight the added value and areas of improvement of MHUs for PHC in disasters. Recommendations of best practices were proposed based on the literature and may guide future deployments. However, there is a paucity of publications, and further data on EMT Type 1 mobile are needed to evaluate MHUs in disasters and improve guidelines.

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