

Conclusion: The findings of this research are consistent with previous studies following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In order to design a public health intervention to minimize occupational-related illness following a disaster, health departments should understand the most susceptible populations for the development of mold-related illness and implement strategies that specifically target the high-risk exposures in these populations.

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The Occupational Health and Safety of First Responders and Health Care Professionals in Magway, Myanmar

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Study/Objective: To examine the occupational health and safety (OHS) of first responders and health care professionals in Magway, Myanmar.

Background: Myanmar has had a long-standing commitment to the OHS of its workforce. There are data supporting the OHS standards across the country. However, there are limited data on the comparison of OHS among first responders including firefighters, volunteers, and health care professionals in times of disaster versus their daily occupation.

Methods: An epidemiological study was conducted in Magway, Myanmar in July 2016, using a written survey in the local Burmese language with 119 items that assessed demographics, occupational and physical health, and type of disaster response with associated illness and injury. 234 participants, 48 (21%) health care professionals, 45 (19%) firefighters, and 141 (60%) volunteers including NGO workers and farmers, completed the survey. 160 were male, 73 were female, and the average age was 33 years. The data were organized using Excel and analyzed using SPSS.

Results: The study revealed that the highest incidence of injuries and illness during a disaster occurred during floods (63.7%) as compared to cyclones (18.9%) and landslides (16%). There was no significant difference with respect to the incidence of cuts, burns, sprains, broken bones, and diarrhea in farmers, firefighters, and health care professionals in the regular setting versus a disaster setting. However, the incidence of heat stroke in farmers (17% and 24%, respectively), vomiting in

firefighters (0% and 16%, respectively), and coughing for both farmers (17% and 21%, respectively) and firefighters (18% and 37%, respectively) was significantly higher than that of health care workers.

Conclusion: The results of this study revealed that first responders, including firefighters and farmers, have a higher risk of injury and illness than health care workers both during the course of their regular employment and during times of disaster.

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Implementation of Tabletop Exercises and Simulations to Improve Practical Skills in a Public Health Disaster Curricula

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Study/Objective: To enhance understanding of disaster management by adding “hands on” practical training to a public health training curricula.

Background: Feedback from emergency managers in our region indicates a lack of practical skills in individuals seeking disaster relief employment. The Colorado School of Public Health offers a Certificate in Public Health Preparedness & Disaster Response Methods. This program is a blended online and in person curricula. As part of designing this certificate we sought to provide practical skills for individuals interested in emergency management.

Methods: To enhance the ability of students to function in disaster response, practical disaster exercises were added to the curricula. We chose typical disaster training formats, both to solidify learning as well as directly train to disaster management. These elements were integrated into a more typical curricula. This included both drills and exercises. Drills involved hands on training such as communication with radios and decontamination. Exercises were carried out in both a tabletop format as well as full scale simulation events.

Results: The new curricula was successfully implemented over two cycles of domestic and international response course training. Course evaluations showed very high engagement of students with a clear understanding of principles taught.

Conclusion: Introduction of practical training, typical of disaster responders into public health curricula, enhances student engagement and learning.

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An Analysis of Student Engagement Patterns and Course Outcomes in a Public Health and Disaster Online Course

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