

MEETING ABSTRACTS**Mental Health in Disaster Medical Response Teams: An Assessment of Existing Resources and Applications for Telemedicine**

Christina A. Woodward^{1,2}, Amalia Voskanyan¹, Todd L. Benham¹, Fadi S. Issa^{1,2}, Alexander Hart^{1,3}, Gregory R. Ciottoni^{1,2}

1. Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Fellowship in Disaster Medicine, Boston, United States
2. Harvard Medical School, Boston, United States
3. Hartford Hospital, Hartford, United States

Background/Introduction: Disaster responders operate in situations that are cognitively, emotionally, and morally distressing. The prevalence of mental health sequelae amongst disaster responders is well-documented. The World Health Organization (WHO) has published minimum standards for Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs), which requires them to assess the mental health and psychosocial support needs of their patients and staff, provide first aid, and ensure referral pathways for follow-up care are available. Specific to EMT staff and volunteers, the standards require that support services are always accessible. However, there is no requirement for EMTs to have

their own mental health specialists, nor is having a mental health specialist assigned to each team and mission necessarily practical.

Objectives: This study will assess the existing mental health resources of WHO EMTs and their use of telemedicine in mental health care.

Method/Description: A survey will be distributed to the leadership of all WHO EMTs that are currently credentialed to capture descriptive statistics.

Results/Outcomes: Data expected to be collected and analyzed by October 1, 2022.

Conclusion: The absence of a mental health specialist significantly limits the availability of support services for EMT personnel. Given that the use of telemedicine in both disaster response and mental health services has been well-documented, telemedicine could be a low-resource method to link WHO EMT staff and volunteers with mental health specialists throughout the deployment cycle.

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