

and disaster management as a means to develop appropriate training and networks with neighbors with additional aims to deploy “health diplomacy” as part of the process to improve human security, tolerance, and reconciliation as well as to ascertain disaster risk. The process is ongoing and is being conducted with the respective Ministries of Health and the international community. Public health and disaster response management was conceptualized as a single unitary instrument in foreign policy development as well as an integral part of the understanding of and response to unwelcome events. A tentative health disturbance model was employed utilizing the Utstein Template (UT), which also was being examined as a basis for training of health disaster managers and public health professionals. From such collaboration and related activities, socio-economic development can be promoted and health systems strengthened. A case will be made for more specific application in the sensitive region of the Balkans, as an operational aid in terms of societal preparedness. It stresses the management function within the context of organized society and the harmonization of disaster response. A tentative declaration awaiting ratification has been drafted between Greece and Turkey. Acknowledgements to Knut Ole Sundnes and Marvin Birnbaum.

Keywords: coordination; disaster management; public health; response

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(224) Urban Solid Wastes as a Major Public Health Disaster in Nigeria

C. C. Ikoku

Dumik International Consultants, Abuja, Nigeria

Currently in Nigeria, most urban cities are experiencing an increased rate of environmental degradation, with solid wastes of various dimensions dumped along the streets, market places, behind houses, and along drainage channels— all arising from increasing population, urbanization, and uncoordinated industrialization. Apart from destroying the aesthetic appeal of these urban cities, these wastes constitute a disastrous public health nuisance, as they contribute to the transmission of parasitic infections. An investigation of all the stages of integrated solid waste management in Nigeria (which includes sorting, collection, storage, and transportation) indicated serious public health implications. In addition to the various communicable infections and upper respiratory tract infections, there are other emerging threats: Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) can be contracted from sharp healthcare wastes and problems of avian flu and other zoonotic infections can be transmitted through poor hygiene and disposal practices. Some of the recommended disposal methods, such as incineration, have public health consequences through the emission of dioxins and other toxic/carcinogenic substances. The current challenge calls for all stakeholders (governments, indigenous and non-indigenous private sector actors, civil society organizations, and all people) to harmonize their activities towards promotion of sustainable waste management procedures. Some of the technologies being applied must be reviewed and improved for better wastes

management and wealth creation. International concerns involved in Ecopreneurship also should capitalize on the wonderful and attractive investment climate provided by Nigerian Government and consider investing in this sector to help arrest the disaster.

Keywords: disease; management; Nigeria; public health; sustainable; waste

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(225) Road Safety Investigation, a New Perspective?

J. A. Stoop

Delft University of Technology, Delft, The Netherlands

Road safety has been considered an intrinsic aspect of road traffic, in which accidents are an unwanted but inevitable byproduct of the system. Due to mechanisms of diminishing returns, policy-making strategies consider present safety performance levels as outstanding, without much perspective for drastic reduction of the present fatality and injury rates. Changes in the road system consequently focus on environmental and congestion issues.

However, in extrapolating trends in motorization and traffic volumes, the World Health Organization (WHO) forecasts road accidents to be the third highest cause of death in the next two decades worldwide. The WHO and the United Nations propose a paradigm shift towards road safety as a public health issue. Focusing on the public health aspects of road safety may promote societal awareness of high-risk activities.

In order to improve knowledge about accident and injury causation, this contribution advocates safety investigations in road traffic on a similar methodological basis as in aviation, shipping, and railways. This advocacy is based on experiences with several in-depth analyses of road accidents conducted for the Dutch Road Victim Organization VVS.

In addition to this practical approach, a more theoretical approach is explored by applying Paul Slovic’s Dual Process Theory. This theory is used to examine the relationships between the notions of “ratio” and “affect”, with the hope that it will help to clarify the difficulties associated with the introduction of a new perspective for road safety policy-making.

Finally, suggestions are made to improve the quality of road accident investigations and to reassess the role and involvement of organizations of road victims and their relatives.

Keywords: Dual Process Theory; public health; road safety; road traffic crashes; World Health Organization

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(226) Pandemic Influenza: An Integrated Approach to Health Service Planning in the Avon Area

J. E. James,¹ C. Payne,² R. J. McKeand¹

1. Great Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust, Bristol, UK

2. South Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust, Bristol, UK

Background: In the UK, there has been much national publicity and government interest in the potential for the emergence of a new pandemic strain of influenza virus and its potential impact on the health of the population, industry, and commerce.^{1,2} The Department of Health (UK) recently

has required all National Health Services (NHS) organizations to prepare contingency plans for pandemic flu.³

Presentation: The presentation will describe the steps taken to improve preparedness across organizations in the Avon area, including issues such as the availability of anti-virals, face masks, and protective equipment. New integrated command and control arrangements will be described alongside the likely challenges to service continuity and new processes developed to assist in managing the consequences of pandemic flu.

The presentation will highlight the utility of service continuity planning as a foundation for robust emergency management arrangements for pandemic flu and other emergencies.

Principle Messages: Pandemic Influenza presents considerable business continuity challenges for the NHS. Planning and Preparedness for pandemic flu will provide a robust platform for the NHS response to other emergencies, including bio-terrorism. Everyone must take part in preparedness for pandemic influenza and business continuity planning.

References:

1. Cabinet Office (2006), Contingency Planning for a Possible Influenza Pandemic, Cabinet Office, London.
2. Department of Health. (2005), Explaining Pandemic Flu: A Guide from the Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health, London.
3. UK Health Departments. (2005) UK Health Departments' Influenza Contingency Plan, Department of Health, London.

Keywords: health service planning; National Health Services; pandemic influenza; preparedness

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(227) Potential Avian Flu Pandemic: National Understanding of Paramedic Attitudes and Concerns, and Innovative EMS-based Surveillance and Triage Strategies

F. Archer,¹ V. Tippert,² F. Burkle³

1. Monash University, Victoria, Australia
2. University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
3. USA

The Australian National Health and Medical Research Council funded this project to study and inform national policy-makers on avian flu. An experienced team of investigators from three universities, one international expert and associate investigators from each Australian state ambulance authority, led the project.

A national survey the attitudes and concerns of Australian paramedics comprised a stratified sample of 3,000 paramedics and their life partners, and included focus groups/interviews in each state.

The next component examined the use of the Medical Priority Dispatch system as a surveillance tool at the point of call-taking. Investigators compared these data with existing surveillance data on influenza-like-illness (ILI) in medical locum services, sentinel general practices, and emergency departments, hospital inpatients, and laboratory results, in two Australian states.

The community-based triage for ILI in the EMS component adapted the population-based triage model for community bio-events, developed by Skip Burkle, for use as a triage tool

in a potential avian flu pandemic. This study's implications for national and state "pandemic flu" planning will be discussed.

Keywords: attitudes; Medical Priority Dispatch; model surveillance; pandemic flu; paramedics

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(228) Urbanization: Threats and Opportunity—Ankara, Athens, and Istanbul

A.K. Sarp,¹ J. Levett,² A.K. Sarp,¹ M. Eryilmaz,³ V. Papanicolau⁴

1. Ankara University, Ankara, Turkey
2. School of Public Health, Athens, Greece
3. Military Hospital, Ankara, Turkey
4. Turkey

Urban population continues to grow at a faster rate than the world population. Three billion people, or about one half of all human beings, live in urban settlements, of which about 5% live in mega-cities. This trend is expected to continue (five billion by 2030). Athens, Istanbul, and Ankara demonstrate a different evolution to their current state. While urbanization and industrialization in Athens (four million) and the southern part of Istanbul (11 million) have had a negative effect on regional cooling, Ankara (four million) does not show any warming trend in spite of its urban geometry. All three systems produce considerable pollution from the heating of buildings, transportation and factories, and present significant health challenges. There is a significant potential for progress with opportunity as well as threats resulting from poor governance, organizational dysfunction, and creeping or sudden disasters. The problem space designated "urbanization" of all three cities will be treated as a system with an emphasis on attributes of failure and the need to offset it, as well as the potential for calamity and its health consequences. This preliminary work is conducted within the framework of Greek-Turkish collaboration funded by the Greek authorities.

Keywords: Ankara; Athens; Istanbul; threats; urbanization

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(229) Simulating the Effect of Pandemic Influenza on the Healthcare System Using Desktop Technology

K.H. Lysak

Clarity Healthcare, Inc., Parker, Colorado USA

This presentation describes a simulation system that models the healthcare system's response to pandemic influenza. It assists public health decision-makers to develop response plans and procedures, and to optimize resource placement.

The simulation combines a geospatial epidemiology model with public health and healthcare system resources. It is run on a high-powered, desk top computer by a user with basic computing skills and analytical capabilities. Someone who is comfortable with Excel has the level of analytical capabilities required.

Using this system, public health personnel can determine which resource acquisition and deployment decisions will maximize the percentage of patients who receive the appropriate level of care within an appropriate timeframe. The system focuses on regional management of healthcare resources.