

Capability Assessment for Readiness (CAR)

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The [U.S.]Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) are working together aggressively to reduce losses from disasters. As an important component of this effort, FEMA and NEMA joined together in 1997 to develop the CAR, an assessment process and tool that States, Territories, and Insular Areas can use to evaluate their own operational readiness and capabilities in emergency management. The CAR was implemented first in 1997 and has matured into a sophisticated and accepted, automated, self-assessment tool that helps the States, Territories, and Insular Areas establish sound mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery practices, establish priorities, and analyze program performance.

The CAR was revised after its initial implementation in 1997, and a second self-assessment is underway this year. The CAR is available in automated or manual versions and is divided into 13 Emergency Management Functions (EMF) common to emergency management programs: 1) laws and authorities; 2) hazard identification and risk assessment; 3) mitigation; 4) resource management; 5) planning; 6) direction, control, and coordination; 7) communications and warning; 8) operations and procedures; 9) logistics and facilities; 10) training; 11) exercises, evaluation, and corrective actions; 12) crisis communications, public education, and information; and 13) finance and administration.

Each EMF is divided into broad criteria called attributes, and the attributes are subdivided further into more detailed criteria called characteristics, to facilitate the self-assessment. Using the CAR, the States will develop a self-profile of strengths and weaknesses in their emergency management programs that then can be used for strategic planning and budgeting. The FEMA uses the aggregate data from this process to produce a national report. Work is underway to develop a CAR process for local jurisdictions and Indian Tribal Governments to use in assessing their emergency management programs.

Keywords: assessment; attributes; characteristics; emergency management functions; FEMA; management; NEMA; preparedness; process; readiness; tool

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Assessing Clinical Governance in the Ambulance Service

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Clinical Governance is defined as a framework through which organisations are accountable for continuously improving the quality of their services and safeguarding high standards of care by creating an environment in which clinical excellence can flourish.¹

In the UK, the Department of Health has introduced a system of clinical governance for health-care organisations, which aims . . . "to produce within every health organisation an environment in which excellence will flourish."² The methodology for this laudable goal was aimed primarily at acute hospitals. However, it has been adapted for use within the ambulance service. A survey of Ambulance Services in the UK was undertaken in March 2000, to look at progress towards clinical governance, and the findings are to be discussed formally at our national ambulance forum (AMBEX) in July 2000 in an attempt to unify future assessments. The results both of the survey and the discussion will be presented as a tool that may be of benefit to some attending health-care organisations.

References

1. Clinical Governance: Quality in the news. NHS Executive 1999. HoH.
2. CMO at launch of the Clinical Governance White Paper.

Keywords: ambulance service; continuous quality improvement; framework; governance; hospitals; instrument; quality

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