Results: Only 26% of the staff that returned the questionnaire actually had participated in any of the hypothetical exercises. Therefore, the exercises provided only limited training to a small number of the staff involved in the response. The staff involved in the Bali response believed that their years of experience and knowledge of Royal Perth Hospital were what assisted them most in their response. Moreover, the results indicated that only 22% of the staff was aware of changes to the disaster plan post-exercise.

Conclusions: However, in the Royal Perth Management Report (2002), which was written on the “Bali Bombing Incident”, two recommendations regarding changes to the plan were made, therefore indicating that the previous exercises had not evaluated adequately parts of the disaster plan, particularly in relation to the care of relatives.

Reference

Keywords: Australia; disaster planning; hypothetical exercises

Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behavior of Occupational Physicians Related to Burn Cases: A Cross-Sectional Survey in Turkey

M. Haberal; A. Kut; I. Tekalak; O. Basaran; G. Moray
Baskent University Faculty of Medicine, Turkey

Introduction: Occupational physicians provide the primary care of victims of burn cases at the workplace. In Turkey, it is routine to certify physicians for work in occupational medicine. This study aimed to evaluate the knowledge, attitudes, and behavior of occupational physicians regarding burn cases.

Methods: A total of 510 occupational physicians working in Ankara, Turkey were surveyed by mail, and 101 (19.8%) physicians responded. Most of these physicians (n = 67, 66.3%) had encountered burn cases within the previous year.

Results: The most frequent type of burn injury was scalds (n = 55, 54.5%) followed by thermal injuries (n = 37, 36.6%). Of the respondents, 22 (21.9%) knew the most appropriate classification of burn injuries. Regarding first-aid treatments prior to triage, only 4% chose the valid answer. The mean rate of positive attitudes of the participants toward the first aid of different types of burn injuries was 70.8%. Only 31.7% of the physicians surveyed used up-to-date, first-aid modalities.

Conclusion: Turkish occupational physicians have inadequate knowledge and inappropriate attitudes toward the first aid and primary care of burn victims. With the vital support of the Burn and Fire Disaster Institute at Baskent University, nationwide educational policies could be improved and assessed.

Keywords: attitudes; behavior; burn; first aid; occupational physicians; primary care; Turkey

Preparing a National Health Emergency Plan

S. Brazier
Ministry of Health, New Zealand

Introduction: Following the shocks of 11 September 2001 and the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), the New Zealand Ministry of Health stepped up preparations and is now completing a National Health Emergency Plan (NHEP) that encompasses the whole health sector.

Background: Like all countries, New Zealand faces the risks of terrorism and pandemics. In an increasingly complex and unsafe world, it is clear that central health agencies must take a key role in focusing on public health threats.

The New Zealand health sector has a devolved model with central funding and local autonomy. However, any response to national health emergencies must necessarily involve central planning and national control. The National Health Emergency Plan has dealt with these tensions by developing a modular and free form plan from which local health managers can select the elements they need.