

Disaster Response, Bioterrorism, and Weapons of Mass Destruction Resources

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Policy Politics Nursing Practice 2002 3: 81

DOI: 10.1177/152715440200300111

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Since September 11, 2001, new language has slipped into our thoughts and conversations: the language of anthrax, the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile, small-pox vaccine, and Homeland Security. The federal government, as well as state and local agencies, is acting quickly to develop, implement, and revise plans to respond to acts of terror. Congress is considering multiple legislative initiatives to better prepare the United States to prevent and respond to terrorism—including enhancing public health systems. Following are Web sites that offer information on bioterrorism and emergency response.

INTERNATIONAL NURSING COALITION ON MASS CASUALTY EDUCATION

Internet address: <http://www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/nursing/coalitions/INCMCE/index.html>

In an effort to provide better emergency care during mass casualty disasters, members of



national nursing, accrediting, and health organizations have joined forces as the International Nursing Coalition for Mass Casualty Education. When a mass casualty event occurs in the United States, nurses—at every level of education—are called on to employ emergency response skills. Though nursing has always been a key part of the nation's emergency response system, many practicing nurses have no training in or experience with emergency preparedness. Vanderbilt University School of Nursing is leading an effort to provide leader-

ship for the systematic development of curriculum and continuing education competencies so that nurses in the community and in all parts of the health care system can better respond to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or mass casualty events (MCE).

Policy, Politics, & Nursing Practice
Vol. 3 No. 1, February 2002, 81-84
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JOHNS HOPKINS CENTER FOR CIVILIAN BIODEFENSE

Internet address: <http://www.hopkins-biodefense.org/>

The Johns Hopkins Center for Civilian Biodefense's mission is to increase national and international awareness of the medical and public health threats posed by biological weapons, thereby augmenting the potential legal, political, and moral prohibitions against their use.

ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF BIOTERRORISM AND EMERGING INFECTIONS

Internet address: <http://www.bioterrorism.slu.edu/>

The center provides public health and health care facilities with the tools needed for preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation of intentional or naturally occurring outbreaks of disease.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, BIOTERRORISM PROGRAM

Internet address: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed a Bioterrorism Program to ensure the rapid development of federal, state, and local capacity to address bioterrorism events.

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Internet address: <http://www.oep.dhhs.gov/>

The Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) is an office within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and has the responsibility for managing and coordinating federal health, medical, and health-related social services and recovery to major emergencies and federally declared disasters including natural disasters, technological disasters, transportation accidents, and terrorism. Working in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the federal interagency community, OEP serves as the lead federal agency for health and medical services response within the Federal Response Plan.

NATIONAL DISASTER MEDICAL SYSTEM

Internet address: <http://www.ndms.dhhs.gov>

The National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) is a cooperative asset-sharing program among federal government agencies, state and local governments, and private businesses and civilian volunteers. NDMS is a federally coordinated system that augments the nation's emergency medical response capability. The overall purpose of the NDMS is to establish a single, integrated, national medical response capability for assisting state and local authorities in dealing with the medical and health effects of major peacetime disasters and providing support to the military and Veterans Health Administration medical systems in caring for casualties evacuated back to the United States from overseas armed conflicts.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY AND CITY HEALTH OFFICIALS (NACCHO)

Internet address: <http://www.naccho.org/index.cfm>

NACCHO is a nonprofit membership organization serving all of the nearly 3,000 local health departments nationwide—in cities, counties, townships, and districts. NACCHO provides education, information, research, and technical assistance to local health departments and facilitates partnerships among local, state, and federal agencies to promote and strengthen public health. As the nation turns its eyes to the issue of bioterrorism preparedness, NACCHO is undertaking activities to inform the public, lawmakers, and members about the essential role of local public health agencies in responding to bioterrorism.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR PROFESSIONALS IN INFECTION CONTROL AND EPIDEMIOLOGY, INC.

Internet address: <http://www.apic.org/>

The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc. (APIC) is a multidisciplinary voluntary international organization with more than 10,000 members. Its purpose is to influence, support, and improve the quality of health care through the practice and

management of infection control and the application of epidemiology in all health settings. The association offers news and education on bioterrorism.

MEDICAL MANAGEMENT OF BIOLOGICAL CASUALTIES HANDBOOK (4TH ED.)

Internet address: <http://www.nbc-med.org/ SiteContent/HomePage/WhatsNew/MedManual/Feb01/handbook.htm>

Published by United States Army Medical Institute of Infectious Disease (USAMRIID), this recently updated handbook is a standard guide to management of biological casualties.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES—DISASTER MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Internet address: <http://www.mentalhealth.org/cmhs/emergencyservices/default.asp>

The Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) works in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency in overseeing national efforts to provide emergency mental health services to survivors of presidentially declared disasters. The branch's activities provide support to individuals and communities affected by disasters, state and local mental health administrators, and other groups that respond to those affected by human-caused disasters (such as school violence).

NATIONAL DOMESTIC PREPAREDNESS OFFICE

Internet address: <http://www.ndpo.gov/>

This office coordinates all federal efforts, including those of the Department of Defense, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency, to assist state and local emergency responders with planning, training, equipment, and exercise needs necessary to respond to a weapon of mass destruction (WMD) incident.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Internet address: <http://www.fema.gov>

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is an independent agency of the federal government, reporting to the president. Since its founding in 1979, FEMA's mission has been to reduce loss of life and property and protect our nation's critical infrastructure from all types of hazards through a comprehensive, risk-based, emergency management program of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

MONTEREY INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, CENTER FOR NONPROLIFERATION STUDIES

Internet address: <http://cns.miis.edu/index.htm>

Established in 1990, the Center for Nonproliferation Studies has worked to reduce the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to educate and build communities of nonproliferation specialists worldwide.

AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY

Internet address: <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov>

The mission of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), as an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is to prevent exposure and adverse human health effects and diminished quality of life associated with exposure to hazardous substances from waste sites, unplanned releases, and other sources of pollution present in the environment.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF MEDICAL ADMINISTRATORS, AMERICAN COLLEGE OF CONTINGENCY PLANNERS

Internet address: <http://www.aameda.org/Specialtygroups/contingency.html>

The American College of Contingency Planners is a specialty group of the American Academy of Medical Administrators. It provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and study topics of mutual

interest in the contingency, disaster, and emergency response arena and prepares planners and executives to effectively contribute to this rapidly changing environment.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Internet address: <http://www.gao.gov/>

The Government Accounting Office (GAO) has published numerous reports and testimonies on bioterrorism and disaster preparedness. Recent publications include:

- *Bioterrorism: Review of Public Health Preparedness Programs.* Statement of Janet Heinrich, before the

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, House Committee on Energy and Commerce. GAO-02-149T, October 10, 2001.

- *Bioterrorism—Coordination and Preparedness.* Statement of Janet Heinrich before the Subcommittee on Government Efficiency, Financial Management, and Intergovernmental Relations, Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives. GAO-02-129T, October 5, 2001.

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