LESSON 4-7
PREPAREDNESS ISSUES
Lesson: Preparedness issues

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Intended Audience of Learners
A broad range of health professionals who may work with the older adult population.

Competencies
This lesson supports learning related to the following competencies, with regard to caring for the geriatric population during the preparedness phase of the disaster cycle:


Core Competency 8.0 “Demonstrate knowledge of public health principles and practices for the management of all ages and populations affected by disasters and public health emergencies.”
Subcompetency 8.2 “Identify all ages and populations with functional and access needs who may be more vulnerable to adverse health effects in a disaster or public health emergency.”
Subcompetency 8.3 “Identify strategies to address functional and access needs to mitigate adverse health effects of disasters and public health emergencies.”

Learning Objectives
At the end of this lesson, the learner will be able to:

4-7.1 Describe elements of the disaster cycle.
4-7.2 Apply understanding of safety responsibilities and principles of working with families of geriatric patients prior to a disaster.
4-7.3 Evaluate local and/or institutional specific access to care and economic issues for geriatric populations during a disaster.

Estimated Time to Complete This Lesson
120 minutes

Content Outline
Module 4: Caring for older adult populations during the disaster cycle: Preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation
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I. Quick introduction to the disaster cycle (note that although the background for these elements was pulled from nursing research, the information is applicable interprofessionally).
   a. Mitigation
      i. Definition: Systems-level planning and preparation to lessen the impact of non-event-specific threats
      ii. Concrete examples from local community/institution
   b. Preparedness
      i. Definition: Pre-event planning and arrangements to minimize negative impact
      ii. Concrete examples from local community/institution
   c. Response
      i. Definition: Intra-event response to specific threats to well-being
      ii. Concrete examples from local community/institution
   d. Recovery
      i. Includes reconstruction and evaluation
      ii. Definition: Normalization of daily living and environment; can lead back into mitigation
      iii. Concrete examples from local community/institution

II. Safety (Note to Instructors: define this section specifically on the basis of your learners’ roles and practice setting)
   a. Unique considerations for the elderly
      i. Older adults are on a spectrum of need, function, and vulnerability.
      ii. The spectrum can range from fully independent to frail and dependent upon others for routine activities of daily living and survival.
   b. Physical safety of self and loved ones
      i. Hazards arising from disaster
      ii. Hazards arising from sheltering in unknown environment
      iii. Hazards arising from interruption of daily routine
      iv. Hazards arising from fatigue and events (including mental and behavioral health)
   c. Environmental safety (Instructors: define this section specifically on the basis of your learners’ roles and practice setting)
      i. Food
      ii. Water
iii. Shelter  
iv. Power  
v. Health care resources (professional, pharmaceutical, facilities, etc)  
vi. Transportation  
vii. Communication  

III. Working with family and caregivers (Instructors: define this section specifically on the basis of your learners’ roles and practice setting)  
   a. Pets and preparedness  
      i. Sheltering facilities that accept pets  
      ii. Expectations of pet owners when presenting to those facilities  
   b. Community-based versus facility-based living  
      i. Autonomy (ethical principle and legal obligation)  
      ii. Staffing issues (expectations, care of the caregiver’s families)  
      iii. Communication with local family members  
      iv. Decision-making authority at the individual and institutional levels  
   c. Caring for the caregiver  
      i. Personal and family safety needs  
      ii. Compassion fatigue  
      iii. Mental health supports  

IV. Access to care  
   a. Medical, mental health  
      i. Identify local resources for physical and mental health care  

V. Economic issues  
   a. Broad construct  
      i. Where are the jobs?  
      ii. Where do people get their money? How do they pay for goods and services?  
      iii. What happens if the ability to collect income or make payments is interrupted for the elderly and their caregivers?  

Suggested Learner Activities for Use in and Beyond the Classroom  
1. Disaster cycle for elderly in their institution or community  
   a. Prepare a map, diagram, or chart of the stages of the disaster cycle  
      i. Complete map, diagram, or chart with specifics for each disaster stage. Please include the following details:  
         1. Agencies with authority, including a point of contact  
         2. Relevant policies and procedures  
         3. Specific resources
ii. On the basis of the created map, diagram, or chart, identify the following:
   1. Where safety, population-specific care, access to health care, and economic needs of the elderly are addressed
   2. Role-specific expectations of the learner
   3. Questions about local resources or support agencies (where are the learners not sure of resources or plans)
   4. Opportunities to improve current plans and policies

b. Create small groups for discussions with no more than 6 to a group. One group member should act as leader and another as scribe.
   i. Compare completed individual maps, diagrams, or charts.
   ii. Compile resources and questions into an aggregated map, diagram, or chart.
   iii. Share findings with the larger group.

Readings and Resources for the Learner

- Required Resources

- Supplemental Resources
  o None

Learner Assessment Strategies

1. Review the individual learner’s completed disaster cycle map, diagram, or chart for the elderly in their institution or community.
   a. Are the specifics at each stage outlined?
   b. Does it include the following:
      i. Agencies with authority, including points of contact?
      ii. Relevant policies and procedures?
      iii. Specific resources?
c. Did the learners identify the following:
   i. Role-specific expectations?
   ii. Questions about local resources/support agencies?
   iii. Opportunities to improve current plans and policies?

2. Small group discussion sessions
   a. Evaluate the small group’s presentation of the aggregate map, diagram, or chart.

Readings and Resources for the Educators
- Required Resources
  o *Caring for Vulnerable Elders During a Disaster: National Findings of the 2007 Nursing Home Hurricane Summit; May 21-22, 2007; St. Petersburg Beach, Florida.*
    doi:10.1016/j.jen.2012.05.024

- Supplemental Resources
Caring for Older Adults in Disasters: A Curriculum for Health Professionals
Module 4: Caring for older adult populations during the disaster cycle
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