Developing Guidelines for Public Health Nurse Data Management and Use in Public Health Emergencies

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Abstract : Background/Significance: During many recent public health emergencies/disasters, public health nursing data has been missing or delayed, potentially impacting the decision-making and response. Data used as evidence for decision-making in response, planning, and mitigation has been erratic and slow, decreasing the ability to respond. Methodology: Applying best practices in data management and data use in public health settings, and guided by the concepts outlined in 'Disaster Standards of Care' models leads to the development of recommendations for a model of best practices in data management and use in public health disasters/emergencies by public health nurses. As the 'patient' in public health disasters/emergencies is the community (local, regional or national), guidelines for patient documentation are incorporated in the recommendations. Findings: Using model public health nurses could better plan how to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate disasters in their communities, and better participate in decision-making in all three phases bringing public health nursing data to the discussion as part of the evidence base for decision-making.

Keywords : data management, decision making, disaster planning documentation, public health nursing
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