Role of mHealth in Effective Response to Disaster

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Abstract : In recent years, many countries have suffered various natural disasters. Disaster response continues to face the challenges in health care sector in all countries. Information and communication management is a significant challenge in disaster scene. During the last decades, rapid advances in information technology have led to manage information effectively and improve communication in health care setting. Information technology is a vital solution for effective response to disasters and emergencies so that if an efficient ICT-based health information system is available, it will be highly valuable in such situation. Of that, mobile technology represents a nearly computing technology infrastructure that is accessible, convenient, inexpensive and easy to use. Most projects have not yet reached the deployment stage, but evaluation exercises show that mHealth should allow faster processing and transport of patients, improved accuracy of triage and better monitoring of unattended patients at a disaster scene. Since there is a high prevalence of cell phones among world population, it is expected the health care providers and managers to take measures for applying this technology for improvement patient safety and public health in disasters. At present there are challenges in the utilization of mhealth in disasters such as lack of structural and financial issues in our country. In this paper we will discuss about benefits and challenges of mhealth technology in disaster setting considering connectivity, usability, intelligibility, communication and teaching for implementing this technology for disaster response.