

Patient Tracking Challenges During Disasters and Emergencies

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Abstract : One of the greatest challenges in disaster and emergencies is patient tracking. The concept of tracking has different denotations. One of the meanings refers to tracking patients' physical locations and the other meaning refers to tracking patients' medical needs during emergency services. The main goal of patient tracking is to provide patient safety during disaster and emergencies and manage the flow of patient and information in different locations. In most of cases, there are not sufficient and accurate data regarding the number of injuries, medical conditions and their accommodation and transference. The objective of the present study is to survey on patient tracking issue in natural disaster and emergencies. Methods: This was a narrative study in which the population was E-Journals and the electronic database such as PubMed, Proquest, Science direct, Elsevier, etc. Data was gathered by Extraction Form. All data were analyzed via content analysis. Results: In many countries there is no appropriate and rapid method for tracking patients and transferring victims after the occurrence of incidents. The absence of reliable data of patients' transference and accommodation, even in the initial hours and days after the occurrence of disasters, and coordination for appropriate resource allocation, have faced challenges for evaluating needs and services challenges. Currently, most of emergency services are based on paper systems, while these systems do not act appropriately in great disasters and incidents and this issue causes information loss. Conclusion: Patient tracking system should update the location of patients or evacuees and information related to their states. Patients' information should be accessible for authorized users to continue their treatment, accommodation and transference. Also it should include timely information of patients' location as soon as they arrive somewhere and leave therein such a way that health care professionals can be able to provide patients' proper medical treatment.

Keywords : patient tracking, challenges, disaster, emergency

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