

ABSTRACT

Hospitals play important roles in mitigating the impacts of disaster in a community. In preparing for disasters, the emergency department personnel of a hospital are expected to know the basic components of the hospital's disaster protocol or plan. This prospective observational cross-sectional study sought to assess the knowledge of hospital disaster preparedness amongst the Emergency Department personnel of an academic hospital in Johannesburg, South Africa.

A self-administered questionnaire was administered to the stratified and randomly selected sample size of sixty (60) personnel including nurses and doctors with a response rate of 85%. Findings from the study revealed that 74.5% of the personnel knew the hazards that placed the hospital at the risk of implementing its disaster plan, but less than 4% knew the detail of the procedures particularly when deciding to declare or end the disaster plan implementation. A third have had formal training in disaster management while 68.6% were willing to be trained to be more adequately prepared for a disaster operation.

There is insufficient knowledge of the disaster plan of the hospital selected therefore more education is required. A summary version of the plan may need to be written in order to facilitate memory of the procedures involved.

KEYWORDS: *Disaster, Disaster Preparedness, Disaster Operation Plan*