Improving Disaster Communication: The Role of Poison Centers in Public Health

Satellite Conference and Live Webcast

Tuesday, July 22, 2008 • 12:00-1:30 p.m. (Central Time)

1:00-2:30 p.m. (Eastern) • 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Mountain) • 10:00-11:30 a.m. (Pacific)

Disaster and mass event situations can lead to uncertainty, fear, anxiety and stress. In these situations, community members need effective and timely information. Poison centers currently offer advice to the general public and the healthcare system on a wide range of poisonings and toxicologic issues. They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and are staffed by specialists who are trained and experienced in handling individuals in extremely stressful situations.

Even though poison centers assume a primary role in poisoning prevention and education, they additionally play a major role in disaster communication, surveillance and public health. Faculty on this broadcast will present the ways poison control has previously connected communities with vital public health information and the future possibilities of collaborations between public health and poison control. Recent incidents such as the SARS outbreak and spinach contamination with E. coli highlight the potential role of poison centers in enhancing the public health response to mass events and disasters.

During this broadcast we will also discuss the potential for public health and poison centers to develop plans for communication and coordination during disasters and mass events. Through such strategic alliances, public health will be able to quickly provide poison centers with vital information, reliably refer the community to poison center phone lines for essential information, and be able to effectively respond to the event in the field as needed.

Conference Details:

Target Audience: Individuals involved in responding to disasters and mass events including professionals in public health, emergency responders, emergency managers, nurses, physicians, pharmacists and poison center specialists.
Registration: www.adph.org/alphtn
CEUs: None for this program
Satellite Technical Information: Ku & C bands
Webcast Access: On the day of the program, go to www.adph.org/alphtn and click on the "view webcast" link.
Conference Materials: Posted on ADPH website approximately one week before the program.
Conference Details Questions: Call 334-206-5618 • Email: alphtn@adph.state.al.us

Program Objectives:

1. List three reasons individuals require immediate poison control information during disasters and mass events.
2. Describe the history, organization and role of poison centers in poisoning prevention and education.
3. Illustrate the historical role of poison centers in disaster communication and public health response using specific examples.
4. List the many roles of public health during disasters and mass events.
5. Discuss potential future poison centers' roles in disaster communication and public health response.

Faculty:

• **Robert Geller, MD**
    Medical Director
Georgia Poison Center

• **Ziad N. Kazzi, MD, FAAEM**
    Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine, Emroy University
    Medical Toxicologist, Georgia Poison Center, Atlanta, GA

• **Valerie Yeager**
    Research Assistant
South Central Center for Public Health Preparedness

PROGRAM FORMAT:

You are invited to join an in-depth question and answer session hosted by faculty from the South Central Center for Public Health Preparedness. The content of the discussion will be determined by you. Your questions will be answered live as they are received throughout the broadcast.

You can email your questions in advance to: alphtnquestions@adph.state.al.us

The South Central Center for Public Health Preparedness is a partnership of the state health departments in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi and the Schools of Public Health at UAB and Tulane University, with funding from the CDC.

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