

HOSPITAL EVACUATION PLAN

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Introduction

Hospitals, as one major cornerstone of contingency planning, are often expected to be fully functional during a major incident. However, the continuous streamlining of today's health care system with a constrained economy, lean production principles and increasing complexity together with changing levels of the threats may result in an evacuation, should hospitals themselves be the targets for a disastrous action.

Objective

The aims of this study were, 1. To evaluate an appropriate risk and vulnerability analysis model as a basis for hospital evacuation, 2. To identify hazards triggering an evacuation, 3. To evaluate the response needed in an evacuation situation and 4. To clarify the impact of such an evacuation plan on the ordinary emergency medical plan.

Material and Method

A systematic online literature search based on the following keywords; evacuation/closure, hospital/medical facilities, and disaster/hazards; alone or with planning, and also a risk and vulnerability analysis as a case study at the hospital in Lidköping, Sweden, were conducted.

Result

Our findings, indicate that hospitals are vulnerable to different risks such as technological dysfunctions, climate changes and terror actions, which can result in an evacuation of patients. In such a situation, well functional transport organization and availability of temporary facilities along with good communication are necessities to assure patient safety. Such functional abilities may be assessed by planning, education and continuous training.

Discussion and Conclusion

There is a need for an elaborated evacuation planning for hospitals. Such plan should continuously be drilled based on a risk and vulnerability analysis and be integrated in the ordinary medical emergency plan. Simulations of different scenarios are one way to determine risks and identify proper actions before a major incident or disaster strikes.