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Evaluation of an Emergency Preparedness Exercise using HSEEP Format

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Purpose:

To design, develop and evaluate the evolution of a functional Hospital Emergency Preparedness Exercise using the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP). The functional exercise was held at Lehigh Valley Health Network, and in conjunction with Philadelphia University as a capstone graduate program project.

Objectives:

To introduce the model of HSEEP to a large Magnet Hospital system Emergency Preparedness exercise program. Evaluate, maintain and expand common preparedness exercise policy and guidance using the HSEEP method. Test and evaluate policies, procedures, and operational concepts during a functional exercise using a new universal structured exercise approach.

Methods:

The project was performed as part of a graduate studies course requirement. The project designed, planned, implemented and executed the HSEEP method of emergency preparedness exercise design.

Exercise Program Management



Results:

The functional exercise was successful using the HSEEP method. Key stakeholders, preparedness planners and health network leaders were educated, exposed and adapted to the HSEEP format of emergency preparedness exercise design.

Conclusions:

Successful design and planning process in the HSEEP method facilitated favorable outcomes in a successful functional exercise and report of after action plans. The project overall changed the paradigm of preparedness exercises for a health network to improve compliance with exercise requirements, enhanced the exposure of preparedness gap analysis and effectively constructed a formalized process of action planning to close the gaps in performance.

Foundation	Design & Development	Exercise Conduct	Evaluation	Improvement Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design and Development - Conduct - Evaluation of Exercises - Improvement Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SMART objectives - Supporting Documentation - Presentations and manuals - Coordinating logistics - Planning exercise Conduct - Selecting an evaluation - Improvement methodology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training for prevention - Vulnerability reduction - Response - Recovery capabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing plans, policies, and procedures, then exercise them in realistic conditions. • Performance assessment, evaluation, and implementation 	<p>Discussion based exercises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans and procedures - Staffing and equipment - Communications - Interagency Coordination <p>Operations Based:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responding to simulated terrorist attacks - Respondings to a natural disaster event - Exercising procedures in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defining concrete measureable steps toward improved protection, response, and recovery of capabilities. The IP identifies timed, measurable goals to improve the targeted capabilities and specifically address actions to be taken in recommendations of the AAR.

Reference: United States Department of Homeland Security. (2008). HSEEP training course participant manual. Federal Emergency Management Agency.