

Interprofessional Disaster/Emergency Action Studies (IDEAS) Project

Objective

To develop an interprofessional online curriculum that prepares and trains health services students on how to respond during disasters and/or emergencies.

Project Approach

1. Utilize resources and expertise from: Centennial College, Michener Institute, University of Toronto, Ryerson University and George Brown College.
2. Design and deliver an online curriculum in instructional design, interprofessional education, emergency/disaster management and e-learning.
3. Engage a Steering Committee with representatives from multiple levels of government, hospitals, educational institutions and diverse professional groups to provide overall insight and expertise.
4. Assign a Curriculum Evaluation Team to critique the curriculum throughout the development phase, ensuring it embodies learning outcomes, knowledge transfer and compliance with ethical guidelines at each institution.
5. Develop an online interprofessional educational game in which students assume roles corresponding to ones they would fulfill during real disaster situations (ie, hostage takings). The game is supported by online text to provide a contextual framework to the learning outcomes and experiential values gained.
6. Students participate in a high-fidelity, two-day simulation exercise in an actual physical environment. The most recent simulation exercise took place in March, 2007, and was modeled on events that took place at Dawson College on September 13, 2006.

Results

Beginning in September 2007, the curriculum will be piloted with 200 volunteer students (medicine, nursing, allied health, police, fire, ambulance, social services, media). To date the online game has received enthusiastic support from faculty and others who have previewed or been trained to facilitate the game. The live simulation in March 2007 was extremely successful, with attendance in the hundreds and significant media coverage.

“Disaster planning and emergency preparedness tends to be siloed,” says Dr. Laurie Mazurik, strategic lead for disaster and emergency preparedness at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto, Medical Director of Centennial College and a principal driver in the development of the IDEAS Network. “This new collaborative approach will lead to seamless care and an understanding of how to use resources in the most effective way.”

Conclusion

The response to the curriculum has been overwhelmingly positive to date, especially in relation to interprofessional education and innovation. When the curriculum is fully launched, it will be recognized for its flexibility and ability to mirror and learn from real world events.

Resources

www.ideasnetwork.ca

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