

Health Action in Crises (HAC) is the World Health Organization (WHO)–wide effort to optimize the Organization’s capacity to strengthen and support Member States and others in preparing for and responding to crises. HAC focuses on assessing health priorities in crises and emergency settings, coordinating health interventions, ensuring that gaps are identified and filled particularly in relation to restoration of basic public health functions, and supporting local capacity and systems strengthening. HAC also focuses on assisting Member States in developing comprehensive strategies for emergency preparedness and risk reduction and in supporting countries in strengthening health transition and recovery programs following crises, disasters, and conflicts.

I congratulate the American Medical Association for the support they have given over the years in meeting the demand for well-trained health care professionals in response to disasters. This new journal is an ideal vehicle for defining the science of disasters and public health emergencies for all disciplines that have a role and a responsibility in protecting the health of a population.

Please accept WHO-HAC’s sincere best wishes for the inaugural issue and the many successful editions that will follow.

Ala Alwan, MD
Assistant Director-General, World Health Organization

To the Editor:

It is an honor to write this letter in support of the American Medical Association’s journal *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*.

Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath reminded the nation that we still have a long way to go to be prepared for disasters. This disaster in particular was a stark reminder of how impoverished communities and significant health disparities make preparedness planning so challenging. The need to identify and plan for vulnerable subgroups is vital because these populations are at higher risk and have unique needs that require special attention. This journal will ensure that these and other gaps are identified and filled. *Disaster Medicine* will be a platform for comprehensive dialogue that will only strengthen the local public health system and its private sector partnerships.

I congratulate the American Medical Association for the support they have given the American Public Health Association (APHA) in the past. *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness* is an ideal vehicle for defining the science of disasters and public health emergencies for all public health workers who have a role and responsibility in protecting the health of a population.

Please accept APHA’s strong support for the inaugural issue and the many successful issues to follow.

Georges Benjamin, MD, FACP, FACEP (Emeritus)
Executive Director, American Public Health Association

To the Editor:

It is an honor to write this letter in support of the American Medical Association’s new journal *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*.

The American Red Cross strongly supports this initiative to promote a scientific base for community planning, response, and recovery from any major public health emergency. This project enhances our national efforts to ensure that the American public is ready in times of disaster, and empowers our dedicated volunteers by establishing best practices for preparedness and response efforts. This effort also recognizes the value of ensuring preparedness for all community assets, public and private.

I congratulate the American Medical Association for the support they have given the Red Cross over the years in meeting the demands for well-trained health care professionals. This new journal is an ideal vehicle for continuing this partnership.

Please accept the Red Cross’ best wishes for the inaugural issue and many successful issues to follow.

Jack McGuire
Interim President and CEO, American Red Cross

To the Editor:

On behalf of the American Nurses Association (ANA), congratulations to you and the American Medical Association in the launch of *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*. The ANA was honored to have participated in your efforts to conceptualize a truly multidisciplinary journal that links disaster preparedness and response with public health readiness. Disaster response is a team effort requiring the skills, knowledge, and expertise of all health professionals—not to mention the willingness of providers to respond when called. *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness* will be an essential tool that will provide health care professionals with the most up-to-date, science-based practice information for disaster response and public health preparedness.

The science of disaster and public health preparedness and response continues to evolve and grow. Harnessing this new knowledge and research so that it can be put into practice as expeditiously as possible is absolutely necessary to improve the success both nationally and internationally of response capabilities. The ANA supports the mission of this journal as it strives to be timely, to speak to the full spectrum of health providers, and to provide rigorous, peer-reviewed scholarship.

Again, congratulations to you on the inaugural issue of *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*. Nursing looks forward to being a strong contributor to the journal, as well as using its contents to improve our ability to prepare and respond to disasters and other public health emergencies.

Rebecca M. Patton, MSN, RN, CNOR
President, American Nurses Association