

events at the station and the level of satisfaction positively correlated with the willingness to return, while the feeling of personal safety did not. The volunteers' anxiety was negatively correlated to the number of rockets that fell in the area of the station and the number of casualties treated.

Conclusions: The volunteers reported that they are willing to endanger their lives in order to repeatedly help during war. Appropriate reception and job assignment at the reinforcement station, reasonable staying conditions, and training and preparation for the reinforcement job will bring the volunteers back to another shift.

Keywords: emergency medical services; Israel; military conflicts; volunteers; willingness to serve

Prehosp Disaster Med

Emergency Response Plan for Teaching Hospital Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka

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The Teaching Hospital Anuradhapura engages in managing a large number of external emergencies. It is one of the hospitals that receives the highest number of patients per unit of time in Sri Lanka, due mostly to the ongoing war in the north and eastern provinces. On 16 occasions from December 2006 to November 2007, there were admissions to the emergency surgical unit in clusters of >15 patients on each occasion. The Working Emergency Response Plan (WERP) of the hospital was initiated in early 2006. At that time, there were not many war casualties coming to the hospital. Since then, the WERP has neither been updated nor re-evaluated for efficiency. Thus, there is a need for the formulation of a new, efficient plan once the existing WERP has been re-evaluated, taking into consideration the current war.

The objectives of this project were to evaluate the existing plan through use of a questionnaire given to the members of the emergency team and to study other existing emergency plans to design a more efficient and flexible working plan. Forty-five members from the current emergency plan were provided with the questionnaire, and four other currently practiced emergency response plans were reviewed. Analysis indicated that the existing WERP is not adequate to maintain communication, coordination, and the optimal use of human resources and infrastructure during the management of mass casualties. Considering the weaknesses of the existing plan and acquiring the essentials from the other reviewed plans, a new, flexible, and revisable plan was designed with the goal of achieving four second-line objectives. This new plan is in the process of implementation. Once the new WERP is well-established, a second study is needed to assess its behavior.

Keywords: hospital; emergency response plan; evaluation; revision; Sri Lanka; war

Prehosp Disaster Med

Smoking Changes in Southern Israel during Operation Cast Lead, January 2009

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Background: Southern Israel, especially around the Gaza strip, was subjected to frequent bombing during the last few years and during the recent Cast Lead military operation, resulting in the exposure of the local population to chronic and acute stress. The aim of the study was to assess the impact of stress on the smoking habits of smokers in Southern Israel in January 2009.

Methods: A random sample of 5,713 Jewish households with active telephone landlines in the Gaza strip area (approximately 40 kilometers) was selected (response rate: 31%). Only smokers were telephone-interviewed, using a constructed questionnaire. In total, 425 smokers participated in the study.

Results: The average number of cigarettes smoked in Southern Israel (17 and 13 cigarettes per day in men and women, respectively) is higher than the national average was (15 and 11, respectively). Most respondents (62%) did not change their smoking habits during the military operation. Of those who did, most (88%) tended to increase their smoking by an average of nine cigarettes per day. Increased smoking during the military operation was reported more frequently by women compared to men ($p < 0.001$), younger compared to older people ($p = 0.02$), and daily compared to occasional smokers ($p = 0.06$).

Conclusions: Operation Cast Lead did not dramatically affect the smoking habits of smokers in Southern Israel. Those affected mostly represent subgroups with a higher tobacco addiction potential. Basal higher smoking rates in a population exposed to chronic stress and increased smoking under acute stress call for tailored smoking cessation strategies emphasizing stress reduction.

Keywords: cigarettes; Israel; Operation Cast Lead; smoking; stress

Prehosp Disaster Med

Successful Secondary Prevention of Post-Traumatic Symptoms among Young Ambulance Team Workers Exposed to Terrorism

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Introduction: From 2000–2004, terrorist attacks, thousands of soldiers and civilians were injured or killed in terrorist attacks. These victims were treated by Magen David Adom (MDA) teams. Following each terrorist attack, the young volunteers provided aid, participated in a volunteer team debriefing targeted on recollections from their involvement, and positively preparing them for future activities. The aim of this study was to evaluate the correlation between post-traumatic symptoms (PTS) experienced by members of medical teams exposed to terrorism and the