Disaster-driven evacuation and medication: A systematic literature review

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BRINGING MEDICATION IS IMPORTANT
• Chronic diseases are an increasing burden all over the world.
• After an extreme event, interruption of care may cause:
  • Exacerbation of chronic conditions
  • Acute secondary conditions
  • Withdrawal syndrome
• Bringing medication at the time of evacuation is a simple and effective way to reduce emergency-related health risks.

CASE STUDY: 2011 JAPAN EARTHQUAKE
• Severe damage to hospitals
• Disruption of infrastructure
• High prevalence of chronic disease due to rapidly ageing population
→ Many “drug refugees”

RESULTS

Problems
• Many people (-48%) arrive at shelters without medication
• Medication refill is an immediate health need
• Prescription is an increasing burden of medical relief activities (-28%)
• Preparedness is not fully achieved (53-90%)
• There are risk groups who are likely to lose their medications (e.g. marginalised people)

Solutions
• Have a personal stockpile (1-2 week/1-month)
• Carry the personal stockpile at all times
  • Make an emergency pack
  • Pack full range of medications and medical device

‘Medications’ are not only ‘pills’.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Every community member has a role to prevent medication losses.

Health Professionals
Education
Individualised emergency plan
Medication lists & stockpile

Patients
Bring medication

CONCLUSIONS
• Bringing medication is the key to:
  • Continuity of care
  • Emergency risk reduction for health
• Preparedness actions include:
  • Having a stockpile
  • Making an emergency kit
  • List of a full range of items
  • Periodical review of emergency plans
• All the stakeholders should be involved
• Further research should:
  • Assess health impact of medication loss
  • Evaluate programs for preparedness
  • Identify vulnerable population

METHODS

Databases
Medline, Embase, PsyCINFO, Maternity and Infant Care, HMIC

Inclusion criteria
i. Evacuees’ action of bringing prescription medications with them
ii. Burden of prescription refills on relief activities after disasters
iii. Disruption of medications due to medication loss

CONCLUSIONS

• BRINGING MEDICATION IS IMPORTANT
• CASE STUDY: 2011 JAPAN EARTHQUAKE
• RESULTS
• RECOMMENDATIONS
• CONCLUSIONS
• METHODS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
We thank Ms Sheila O’Malley, Public Health England, for establishing search strategy.

KEY READINGS
2. WHO. Disaster Risk Management for Health Fact Sheet: Noncommunicable Diseases http://www.who.int/hac/events/drm_factsheet_noncommunicable_diseases.pdf