



Scenario 1: Background

Across the world, rising global temperatures are having a catastrophic effect, driving changing weather patterns and causing more frequent and severe extreme weather events including heatwaves, bushfires, droughts, severe storms, floods and cyclones.

Extreme weather events often result in significant human, economic and environmental loss.

Amid these challenges, healthcare professionals and community members play a crucial role in emergency responses and broader health system adaptation to climate change.

Instructions

- This simulation will be conducted as a 'table-top' group-based simulation activity.
- Participants should form into six groups. Each group will have a pack of cards that profiles a different extreme weather event.
- **Read the first two cards in your pack only. The remaining cards are to be left upside down** until the facilitator calls 'start', at which time your group is to read and discuss how you would respond to the situation described on the **next card only**.
- At specific points in time, the facilitator will call 'next card' and your group will turn over the next card and discuss how you would respond to the unfolding situation described.
- When responding to the situations described in the scenarios, it is important to think broadly and consider more than the immediate healthcare concerns presented. Your focus should be on coordination of the emergency response, as well as prioritisation and communication.
- **While you may not feel that you have the experience to manage the situations presented, you may in fact be the most experienced person in a disaster situation and others will turn to you for advice – this simulation is about being resourceful and creative ... so do the best you can with the information at hand.**
- At the end of the simulation activity, the facilitator will lead a debrief and discussion with the whole group.

Scenario 1: The flood

Part 1

The river in the small town where you live is swelling with a ferocity no one anticipated and the levee has been breached. Floodwaters are surging through the town, inundating homes and businesses. Residents have been told to urgently evacuate to the local primary school, situated on the only hill in the area.

It is 3pm. Amidst the chaos, you realise that you and a retired paramedic are the only healthcare professionals among the more than 200 people who have evacuated to the school.

What are your immediate priorities?

Scenario 1: The flood

Part 2

It is 6pm. The evacuees are cold and hungry. You've identified that a number of people have sustained injuries during the evacuation. Some of the older people on anticoagulant medications are having significant blood loss. Many people have red and swollen eyes from the contaminated flood waters.

Most of the evacuees did not have time to pack their prescription medications and you are told that there are people with type 1 diabetes who do not have glucometers, insulin or food with them.

There are also mothers with infants. While most are breastfeeding, there are some whose babies are formula fed - they don't have equipment for sterilising baby bottles and many have run out of formula.

How are you going to manage these pressing issues?

Scenario 1: The flood

Part 3

It is 11am the next day. You've been asked to coordinate the evacuation of the 200 people to a larger town. There are four small boats for the evacuation.

How will you coordinate the evacuation and prioritise the order in which people are evacuated?

Scenario 1: The flood

Reflection

What might be the immediate and longer term social/emotional/mental health impacts of this extreme weather event?

You are aware that changing weather patterns will result in more frequent and severe extreme weather events such as floods. What advice would you give to community members and primary care organisations to help them better prepare for such events?