



EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS SIMULATION

Acknowledgement



The Extreme Weather Event Simulation was developed by:

- Distinguished Professor Tracy Levett-Jones, University of Technology Sydney
- Dr Aletha Ward, Southern Cross University
- James Bonnamy, Monash University.

Tracy, Aletha and James are members of the Planetary Health Collaborative for Nurses & Midwives. For more information about the Collaborative access this QR code:



Background

- The World Health Organization has described climate change as the greatest threat to public health in the 21st Century.
- Australians are already feeling the effects of a warming planet with more frequent and intense heatwaves, unprecedented droughts, fires and floods.
- Illness, injury, distress and death are just a few of the impacts of extreme weather events on people's health and well-being.

Background

- 55% of Australian healthcare professionals report that their workplaces have been affected by an extreme weather events.
- The International Council of Nurses states that:

'Nurses can make a powerful contribution to both mitigate climate change and to support people and communities to adapt to its impacts. Leadership from nurses to build climate resilient healthcare systems is critical.'

Note: The six scenarios profiled in this simulation are informed by real experiences.

Learning Outcomes

Completion of this table-top simulation will enable participants to:

- Explore how extreme weather events can affect individuals, healthcare infrastructure, resources and clinical care.
- Develop skills in assessment, prioritisation and decision-making while in challenging situations.
- Adapt teamwork and communication skills to ensure a coordinated and efficient response during crises.
- Advise colleagues, healthcare organisations and communities on preparing for extreme weather events.
- Reflect on your experiences, identify key lessons learned, and apply these insights to real-world situations.

Instructions

- This simulation will be conducted as a 'table-top' group-based simulation activity.
- Participants will form into six groups. Each group will have a pack of cards that profiles a different extreme weather event.
- Place cards upside down so that the images rather than text are visible.
- **Turn and 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 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.

Debrief and Discussion

Overall, how did you feel about the simulation experience?

Each group is to give a brief outline of their simulation scenario, two of the main challenges encountered and the strategies used to address them.

What is one piece of advice that you would give to the community in your scenario to prepare for future events?

Debrief and Discussion

As a group, discuss the simulation experiences using the '5S' focus areas with reference to future planning in community and healthcare settings.

1. **Staff** = available personnel (healthcare and community members)
2. **Stuff** = supplies and equipment
3. **Space** = facilities and infrastructure
4. **Systems** = policies and processes (when appropriate/available)
5. **Security** = safety and support (yours and others)

Conclusion

The impacts of climate change are increasingly evident across the world, resulting in more frequent and severe extreme weather events.

Healthcare professionals are on the front lines of these crises, both professionally and personally.

This simulation has provided an opportunity to explore nurses' leadership, resilience, and adaptability in the face of unprecedented challenges, both in the immediate response, and in building community resilience.