Individual competencies in disaster preparedness and response

Kristine M. Gebbie, DrPH, RN
Hunter College School of Nursing
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Definition

"a cluster of related knowledge, skills, and attitudes that affect a major part of one's job (a role or responsibility), that correlates with performance on the job, that can be measured against some accepted standards, and that can be improved via training and development".

Why competency?

- Competency-based approaches focus on what people can DO
- Competent workers will make the difference in any disastrous event
- Competency in individual care or routine public health practice does not automatically translate
# Individual Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complexity of competency</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Practitioner</th>
<th>Expert</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Knowledge</td>
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<td>Application</td>
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<td>Synthesis &amp; critique</td>
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Competencies, not capacity

- Competencies are what the worker is able to do
- Capacity is what the organization is able to do
- Organizational capacity is dependent upon, but more than, the competencies of its workforce:
  - Equipment
  - Budget
  - Policies and systems
  - Access to information
Emergency preparedness competencies—60 approaches!

- Core competencies for both clinicians or public health workers, but
  - not all training has been consistent

- Technical competencies associated with specific tasks and functions--varied
  - Incident management
  - Unusual equipment (communications, PPE)
  - Disaster Life Support
Core competencies for all health professionals*

- Preparation and Planning
- Detection and Communication
- Incident Management and Support Systems
- Safety and Security
- Clinical/Public Health Assessment and Intervention
- Contingency, Continuity, and Recovery
- Public Health Law and Ethics

NDLSEC course revisions

- A complete overview of the ADLS, BDLS, CDLS courses
- Assuring that all are competency-based
- Consistent with these core competencies
- Focus to date more on clinicians within the broader range
Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA).

- Mandates a core competency-based training program for public health practitioners
- ASPH/CDC undertaking the effort to specify the competencies on which it should be based
Mid-level workers

- Employees of public health organizations (or organizations carrying out public health functions)
- Not limited to ‘professionals’
  - 10 years experience with a high school diploma, bachelor's, or higher degree; and
  - five years experience with a master of public health (MPH) degree or equivalent
9 domains

- Communication
- Hazard, Vulnerability, and Risk Assessment
- Interventions
- Leadership
- Legal.
- National Response Framework
- Planning and Improvement
- Surveillance and Investigation.
- Worker Health, Safety, and Resilience
Core, not specialized

- Core means all of them for everyone!
- These competencies will NOT turn every mid-level worker into
  - an emergency planner, or an interagency incident commander
  - An epidemiologist, laboratorian, public health nurse or other specialist
- There will be workers on both sides of this group

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Where do health professionals fit?

- Community members
- Practitioners in an organization
  - Community site or small practice
  - Hospital or institution
- Concerned individuals with specific skills
  - Health professionals
  - Communications skills
  - Administrative ability
In a disaster

- It’s the circumstances that change
  - Not competency
  - Not expectations
- If competency isn’t there, it won’t appear by magic
- Thank you!

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