



County of Berks Pennsylvania



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What is a Disaster

- **An event that causes serious loss, destruction, hardship, unhappiness, or death.**
- **Examples include tornado, hurricane, flood, terrorist event, pandemic, blizzard or winter storm.**



Course Objectives



- **DEFINE DISASTER**
- **DELINEATE DISASTER RESPONSES**
- **DEFINE SPECIAL POPULATIONS**
- **PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, COGNITIVE, BEHAVIORAL, AND SPIRITUAL REACTIONS TO DISASTER**
- **CHARACTERISTICS OF A PANDEMIC**
- **WELLNESS RESOURCES**
- **MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES**

Disaster Response, Operations, and Assumptions



- **Every disaster is different.**
- **Trauma affects individuals and the community.**
- **Response strategy depends on disaster characteristics.**
- **A disaster causes disruptions and changes.**
- **Everyone that experiences a disaster is affected by it.**



Disaster Response, Operations, and Assumptions



- **The severity of reactions is affected by the type of, level of exposure to, and casualties associated with the disaster.**
- **Prior mental illness or substance abuse can play a factor.**



Special Populations



- **NON ENGLISH-SPEAKING INDIVIDUALS**
- **PRIOR HISTORY OF TRAUMA**
- **DEAF/HARD OF HEARING**
- **HOMELESS**
- **ELDERLY**
- **INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**
- **INDIVIDUALS WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE OR MENTAL HEALTH HISTORY**
- **INDIVIDUALS IN ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES**
- **INDIVIDUALS WITH PETS/FARM LIVESTOCK**

Individuals Reactions

- **Physical**
- **Emotional**
- **Cognitive**
- **Behavioral**
- **Spiritual**



Physical Reactions

- **Gastrointestinal problems**
- **Headaches, aches, and pains**
- **Weight change**
- **Sweating or chills**
- **Tremors**
- **Clumsiness**
- **Increased tension**
- **Sleep Disturbance**



Emotional Reactions

- **Heroic euphoric, or invulnerable**
- **Denial**
- **Anxiety or fear**
- **Depression**
- **Guilt**
- **Apathy**
- **Grief**



Cognitive Reactions

- **Disorientation and confusion**
- **Poor concentration**
- **Difficulty setting priorities or making decisions**
- **Loss of objectivity**
- **Nightmare or flashbacks**
- **Preoccupation with the disaster**



Behavioral Reactions

- **Change in activity level**
- **Alcohol and drug use or abuse**
- **Increased use of medications**
- **Difficulty communicating or listening**
- **Irritability and anger**
- **Crying**
- **Inability to sleep**
- **Avoidance of triggering places or activities**



Spiritual Reactions

- **May assist some survivors with coping and resilience.**
- **May cause some survivors to question their beliefs and life structures.**



Pandemic



**A PANDEMIC IS AN EPIDEMIC
OF AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE
THAT HAS SPREAD ACROSS A
LARGE REGION AFFECTING A
SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF
PEOPLE.**

Characteristics



- **DIFFERENT FROM OTHER NATURAL DISASTERS IN THAT THERE IS NO DEFINED BEGINNING OR END.**
- **CAN NOT SEE OR TOUCH THE PERCEIVED THREAT.**
- **DURATION IS GENERALLY 18-24 MONTHS.**
- **SLOW MOVING**
- **MASS FATALITIES**
- **FEAR**

Wellness Activities



- FOLLOW A SCHEDULE
- STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR SOCIAL SUPPORTS VIRTUALLY
- EXERCISE
- FUEL YOUR BODY WITH HEALTHY CHOICES
- MEDITATION
- DEEP BREATHING EXERCISES
- GRATITUDE JOURNAL
- DISCOVER NEW HOBBIES
- READ
- LISTEN TO MUSIC

Resources



- **211 IN YOUR COMMUNITY**
- **24/7 CRISIS INTERVENTION IN YOUR COMMUNITY**
- **DISASTER RESPONSE AGENCIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY SUCH AS RED CROSS, VOAD, EMERGENCY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TEAM**
- **MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS**
- **SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROVIDERS**
- **DISABILITIES ORGANIZATIONS**
- **HOMELESS ORGANIZATIONS**

Questions



Contact Information



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