Training of clinicians for public health events relevant to bioterrorism preparedness

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Record Status
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Citation

Authors' objectives
Recent terrorist attacks have increased concerns about the Nation's vulnerability to terrorism, including the potential use of biological weapons. The purpose of this evidence report is to identify and review data on the most effective ways to train clinicians to respond to a bioterrorist attack or other public health events that may pose similar threats to the health care system, including infectious disease outbreaks, toxidromes or mass poisonings, catastrophic events that incite public fear, and events that call for use of hospital disaster plans.

Authors' conclusions
Modest evidence exists about effective ways to train clinicians to detect and manage an infectious disease outbreak. Very little evidence exists about how to effectively train clinicians to respond to other types of public health events deemed relevant to bioterrorism preparedness. Almost no evidence exists on training clinicians in aspects of response such as using central information resources, communicating with other professionals, and reporting events to a central agency. This gap in evidence warrants an increased commitment to developing and evaluating educational programs relevant to bioterrorism preparedness, infectious disease outbreaks, and other public health events.

Project page URL
http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/epcsums/biotrsum.htm

Indexing Status
Subject indexing assigned by CRD

MeSH
Bioterrorism; Disaster Planning; Education, Continuing; Health Personnel; Public Health Practice

Language Published
English

Country of organisation
United States

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AccessionNumber
32002000338

Date bibliographic record published