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Background and vision

The frequency of disasters, both natural and human-caused, continues to increase throughout the world.

Disasters at local and regional levels have large impacts on cities and their communities across entities of practice, such as neighborhoods, hospitals, and city and state governments. Guided by our commitment to building safer, stronger communities, the Northwestern Medicine Department of Emergency Medicine and George Chiampas, DO, envisioned and created the Disaster Management and Community Emergency Preparedness Initiative (DMCEPI). Funding for the initiative is generously provided by the Thorek Memorial Foundation.

DMCEPI forms a cohesive network across private and public partners with the collective goal of preparing for and mitigating natural and human-caused disasters and emergencies, and their impacts, by leveraging the expertise of stakeholders.

DMCEPI provides education, training, community outreach and real-world application to strengthen communities' awareness and skills in disaster management and emergency preparedness. DMCEPI aims to be a leading resource for local, national and global communities.

The pillars of DMCEPI, which act as overarching areas of concentration of the initiative, are:

Education, Training and Knowledge-Sharing

Community Hospital Engagement

Community Awareness and Outreach

Real-World Practice and Application

Internal and External Partnerships

Mission

The mission of DMCEPI is to establish, within the Northwestern Medicine Department of Emergency Medicine, a nationally recognized initiative encompassing mass event and disaster management, emergency preparedness, and community safety; and to work closely with private and public partners to strengthen communities' awareness, potentially life-saving knowledge and skills, health, and safety through knowledge-building and collaboration.

Goals

The goals of DMCEPI are to facilitate knowledge-sharing across communities of practice, including citywide healthcare organizations, local communities and Northwestern University educational missions and its global partnerships. Each goal aims to build capacity among these communities to better prepare and respond to disasters.

Goal 1: Educate, train and facilitate disaster preparedness and response knowledge-sharing among key stakeholders.

Objectives

- Create and implement Medical School Curriculum
- Create and co-implement Healthcare Workers Curriculum and Implementation
- Create and co-implement Public and Bystander Curriculum and Implementation
- Advance transdisciplinary and application-focused research in collaboration with stakeholders
- Increase funding to scale activities
- Establish a resource hub for stakeholders to access training materials, evidence-based research, reports and policies for knowledge-building

Goal 2: Engage with community hospitals on existing disaster preparedness and response practices.

Objectives

- Align with Thorek Memorial Foundation goals
- Perform disaster preparedness needs analysis
- Co-create community hospital preparedness curriculum
- Facilitate training, seminars and events

Goal 3: Establish community awareness and outreach activities.

Objectives

- Manage preparations and support for large-scale community events
- Facilitate training, seminars and events

Goal 4: Engage in real-world practice and application with community partners.

Objectives

- Provide best practices and standards across disciplines and entities (government, academia and corporate)
- Create models of care for real-world events (mass gatherings, and sporting and entertainment events)

Goal 5: Establish internal and external partnerships.

Objectives

- Utilize the Northwestern Medicine network (including Northwestern University) to create and build partnerships that align with DMCEPI goals
- Build upon existing external partnerships and forge additional partnerships that align with DMCEPI goals

For more information, visit feinberg.northwestern.edu/sites/disaster-management-preparedness/

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