

Public Health Emergencies in Large Populations (PHELP)

PHC 6186 / Section #311

SYLLABUS

Instructors:

Dr. Wayne W. Westhoff
Robert Tabler, Ph.D.^(c), M.A., M.A.
College of Public Health
13201 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33612

Telephone:

Westhoff: (813) 974-6621
e-mail: wwesthof@hsc.usf.edu
Tabler: (813) 974-2908
e-mail: rtabler@hsc.usf.edu

Instructor Office Hours via e-mail or chatroom:

Tuesday 5:00-6:00 and by appointment.

Textbook:

Refugee health: An approach to emergency situations (1997). Medecins San Frontieres; MacMillian Education Ltd.: London & Basingstoke. ISBN 0-333-72210-8

War and public health. (1996). Pierre Perrin; International Committee of the Red Cross: Geneva. ISBN 2-88145-077-6.

Course Description:

This course is designed to develop or improve the skills of persons interested in providing emergency health services in humanitarian emergencies. The course is divided into two parts:

Meeting health needs:

Focuses on technical assistance such as food & nutrition, water & sanitation, providing health services, reproductive health and control of communicable diseases.

Humanitarian and ethical Issues:

Covers international humanitarian law, human rights, ethics, and geopolitical issues related to population displacement particularly from conflict.

Course Content:

Definitions and responses

How do we define a disaster? Definitions used in disaster management. What is a complex humanitarian emergency? Who is a refugee? Who looks after refugees and internally displaced persons?

Disaster Management

How best to prepare a response to an emergency? What are the expected hazards? Who are in the vulnerable populations? What is the magnitude of risk?

Conducting assessments

Populations affected by emergencies have urgent public health needs. Predicting and measuring these needs are critical to an effective response effort. Identifying at risk populations.

Responding to needs

Priority of needs must be determined and urgent needs met as quickly as possible. Yet, effectiveness must be achieved and long-term outcomes considered.

Environmental health

Epidemics are common in emergencies because environmental health is frequently of inferior quality than in normal conditions. Basic public health actions can prevent outbreaks if appropriate measures are put into place early.

Food and nutrition

In emergencies the greatest need is often food. Yet, knowing what supplies are appropriate and distributing them equitably are frequently difficult.

Information and surveillance

The health status of populations affected by disasters must be monitored in order to improve decision-making.

Communicable diseases

Populations displaced in emergencies are often at risk of disease, both pre-existing, and those arising from a new or altered environment.

Reproductive health

Refugees have different reproductive health needs from other populations. Some groups are increasingly at risk from HIV.

Humanitarian ethics

Maintaining neutrality, humanity, impartiality, independence and assuring equity in access to services is an ethical issue in emergencies.

International Humanitarian Law

Humanitarian measures are guided by the Geneva conventions, which protect the safety of civilians, non-combatants and health workers in a conflict.

Human rights and human security

Violation of basic human rights is often the basis for loss of human security and livelihoods. Awareness may prevent many abuses. Security issues also exist for the humanitarian aid worker operating in the field.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

- Select at least two methods of assessment for specific emergency situations in the field.
- Develop and implement one general or one specific assistance health program for a displaced population.
- Foresee the possible development of immediate assistance projects into development programs.
- Develop a seamless approach to provision of services among humanitarian organizations.
- Develop, implement, and monitor adequacy of services provided to affected populations.
- Assess choices made in the field by their ethical implications.
- Apply the principles of International Humanitarian Law to providing services in conflict situations.

Course Requirements:

1. Participate in chat-room discussions with other students in your specific group. Each week there will be a continuation of a scenario that will need to be addressed in a group discussion (10%).
2. Prepare a term paper with a minimum length of 15 pages on a topic in humanitarian assistance. Each topic selected by a student, must have the instructors approval (30%).
3. Mid-term exam (30%)
4. Final exam (30%)

Grading Policy:

Grading will be determined a grading system of A, B, C, D, or F. No + or – will be given.

Miscellaneous University Policy notes:

No makeup of missed work will be allowed. There will be no lectures as all classes will be in an open forum format and thus selling notes or tapes is not an issue. Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class due to the observation of a major religious observance must provide notice of the dates to the instructor, in writing, by the second meeting of the class.

Schedule of Classes:

Week 1 - *Basics of Public Health Emergencies in Large Populations (WWW, RT)*

Readings:

- Changing approaches to the refugee problem. Pages 19–40.
- Noji, E.K. & Toole, M.J. (1997). The historical development of public health responses to disasters. *Disasters*, 21(4), 366–376.

Week 2 – *Planning and Initial Assessment (WWW)*

Readings:

- Refugee Health – pages 7–54, 309
- War and Public Health – pages 3–21
- Assessment and Planning. Pages 3–16.
- D’Souza, F. (1981). Who is a refugee? Definitions and assistance. International Disaster Institute.
- Minimum Standards.
- Oxfam. (1994). Health Care for Refugees and Displaced Populations. Assessment and planning.
- Parlow, A. (1998). Formalizing relations between DOD and OFDA in complex humanitarian crisis. Conference on Civil-Military Relations in Complex Humanitarian Crisis. Harvard University: Cambridge, MA.
- Sandler, R.H., Epstein, P.R., Cook-Deegan, R.M., & Shukri, A. (1991). Initial medical assessment of Kurdish refugees in the Turkey-Iraq border region. *JAMA*, 226(5), 638-640.
- Weiss, T. (1997). A research note about military-civilian humanitarianism: More questions than answers. *Disasters*, 21(2), 95-117.

Week 3 - *Environmental Health (WWW)*

Readings:

- Refugee Health – pages 66-80
- War and Public Health – pages 77-119
- Esrey, S.A., Potash, J.B., Roberts, L., & Shiff, C. (1991). Effects of improved water supply and sanitation on ascariasis, diarrhoea, dracunculiasis, hookworm infection, schistosomiasis, and trachoma. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 69(5), 609-621.
- Roberts, L., Chartier, Y., Chartier, O., Malenga, G., Toole, M. & Rodka, H. (2001). Keeping clean water clean in a Malawi refugee camp: A randomized intervention trial. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 79(4), 280-287.
- Smith, M., & Reed, R. (1991). Water and sanitation for disasters. *Tropical Doctor*, 21(1), 30-37.
- Water Sources – ANNEX 16, ANNEX 17, ANNEX 20
- Water and War: A symposium on water in armed conflicts

Week 4 - ***Shelter and Site Planning (RT)***

Readings:

- Refugee Health – pages 114–123
- War and Public Health – pages 112- 18
- Site planning. *Public Health Engineering in Emergency Situation*, (1st ed.) 1994.

Week 5 – ***Nutrition and catch-up for on-line issues (WWW)***

Readings:

- Mason, J., Gillespie, S., Clugston, G., & Greaves, P. (1992). Misconceptions on nutrition of refugees. *The Lancet*, 340, 1354.
- Payne, L. (1997, August 8-11). Impact of food delays on refugees. *ENN Field Exchange*, 9–15.

Week 6 - ***Epidemiology (RT)***

Readings:

- Refugee Health – pages 191-205
- War and Public Health – pages 241–297, 365-378
- Kreiss, J. (1987). Epidemiology and health planning. In R. Sandler (Ed.), *Medical Care of Refugees*. Oxford Press. 13-29.
- Martin, A., Moore, J., Collins, C., Biellik, R., Kattel, U., Toole, M., & Moore, P. (1994). Infectious disease surveillance during emergency relief to Bhutanese refugees in Nepal. *JAMA*, 272(5), 377-381.
- Moren, A., Antona, D., Bitar, D., Etchegorry, M., Tchatchioka, M., & Lungu, G. (199). Practical field epidemiology to

Investigate a cholera outbreak in a Mozambican refugee camp in Malawi, 1988.

- Peterson, E.A., Roberts, L., Toole, M.J., & Peterson, D. (1998). The effect of soap distribution on diarrhoea: Nyamithuthu Refugee Camp. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 27, 520-524.
- Spiegel, P.B. & Salama, P. (2000). War and mortality in Kosovo, 1998-99: An epidemiological testimony. *The Lancet*, 355, 2204-2209.
- Weinberg, J. & Simmonds, S. (1995). Public health, epidemiology and war. *Social Science and Medicine*, 40(12), 1663-1669

Week 7 - ***Implementing Health Services (WWW)***

Readings:

- Refugee Health – pages 243-285
- War and Public Health – pages 301-332
- Berkman, P., Dawans, V., Schmets, G., Vandenberg, D., & Autier, P. (1997). Inappropriate drug donation practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1992-1996. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 1383-1384.
- Simmonds, E. S., Vaughan, P. & Gunn, W. (1983). *Refugee Community Health Care. Health center activities.* Oxford University Press.

Week 8 - ***Communicable Diseases (WWW)***

Readings:

- Refugee Health – pages 145– 190; 314–363
- War and Public Health – pages 123–188
- Goma Group. (1995). Public health impact of Rwandan refugee crisis: what happened in Goma, Zaire, in July, 1994. *The Lancet*, 345, 339-343.
- Legros, D., Paquet, C., Perea, W., Marty, I., Mugisha, N.K., Royer, H., Neira, M., & Ivanoff, B. (1999). Mass vaccination with a two-dose oral cholera vaccine in a refugee camp. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 77(10), 837-847.

Week 9 - ***MIDTERM EXAM (Take-home)***

Week 10 - ***Reproductive Health (WWW)***

Readings:

- Refugee Health – pages 252-259

- Barnett, B. (1995). Family planning rarely available for refugees. *Network*, 4-6.
- Carballo, M., Grocutt, M., & Hadzihasanovic, A. (1996). Women and migration: A public health issue. *World Health Statistics Report*, 49(2), 158-164.
- Goodyear, L. & McGinn, T. (1998). Emergency contraception among refugees and the displaced. *JAMA*, 53(5), 266-269.
- Gardner, R. & Blackburn, R. (1996). People who move: New reproductive health focus. *Population Reports*, 24(3), 1-27.
- World Development Indicators. (2001). Women in development.

Week 11 - ***Mental Health (RT)***

Readings:

- Refugee Health – pages 286-281
- War and Public Health – pages 235–237
- Bolton, P. (2001). Local perceptions of the mental health effects of the Rwandan genocide. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 189(4), 243-248.
- Bracken, P. J., Giller, J. E., & Summerfield, D. (1995). Psychological responses to war and atrocity: The limitations of current concepts. *Social Science and Medicine*, 40(8), 1073-1082.
- Brody, E. (1970). *The mental health and well-being of refugees: Issues and directions*. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications.
- Carlson, E. B. & Rosser-Hogan, R. (1991). Trauma experiences, posttraumatic stress, dissociation, and depression in Cambodian Refugees. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 148(11), 1548-1551.
- Eisenbruch, M. (1991). From post-traumatic stress disorder to cultural bereavement: Diagnosis of Southeast Asian refugees. *Social Science and Medicine*, 33(6), 673-680.
- Orley, J. (1970). *Psychological disorders among refugees: Some clinical and epidemiological considerations*. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 193-205.

Week 12 - ***Resettlement and Ethical Issues (RT)***

Readings:

- Refugee Health – pages 295–306
- War and Public Health – pages 407-433
- Anderson, M. B. (1997). You saved my life today, but for what tomorrow? In J. Moore (Ed.), *Hard Choices: Moral Dilemmas in Humanitarian Intervention*, 137-156.

- Barber, B. (1997). Feeding refugees, or war? The dilemma of humanitarian aid. *Foreign Affairs*, 76(4), 8–14.
- Geiger, H. J. (1996). The impact of war on human rights. 39–49.
- International Red Cross. (1994). Code of Conduct in Disaster Relief. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations.
- Levin, A. (2001). Physicians for human rights. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 134(6), 537-540.
- Mann, J. M. (1997). Medicine and public health, ethics and human rights. *Hastings Center Report*, 27(3), 6-13.
- Norwegian Medical Association. (1996). The doctor's role in times of war. Norwegian Medical Association Committee on Human Rights. *DHA News*, 35–36.
- Slim, H. (1997). Doing the right thing: Relief Agencies, moral dilemmas and moral responsibility in political emergencies and war. *Disasters*, 21(3), 244-257.
- Terry, F. (2001). Military involvement in refugee crises: A positive evolution? *The Lancet*, 357, 1431.
- World Medical Association. (1994). World Medical Association statement on medical ethics in the event of Disasters. 46th World Medical Association General Assembly Stockholm, Sweden.

Week 13 - **TERM PAPER DUE**

Week 14 - **International Humanitarian Law/ Human Security (WWW)**

Readings:

- War and Public Health – pages 379–403
- Boutwell, J. & Klare, M.T. (2000). Small arms. *Scientific American*, 48–53.
- Lavoyer, J. (19__). International humanitarian law, protected zones and the use of force. In Biermann & Vadset (Ed.), *U.N. Peacekeeping in Trouble: Lessons Learned from the Former Yugoslavia*. Brookfield: Ashgate, 262–279.
- Special Report War-crimes tribunals. (2001, June 16). Judging genocide. *The Economist*, 23–25.
- Winter, R. (2001). The year in review. *World Refugee Survey 2000*. U.S. Committee for Refugees, Washington.
- Sheik, M., Gutierrez, I., Bolton, P., Spiegel, P., Thieren, M., & Burnham, G. (2000). Deaths among humanitarian workers. *BMJ*, 321, 166-168.
- Tharoor, S. & Johnstone, I. (1997, June). Protection and security for humanitarian workers. *DHA News*, 9 - .
- Viera de Mello, S. (1997). Who cares for the carers? *DHA News*, June, 1997.

Week 15 - ***Coordination and Inter-relationships of agencies in a disaster (RT)***

Readings:

- War and Public Health – pages 434-446

Week 16 - ***FINAL EXAM***

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Anderson, M. B. (1997). You saved my life today, but for what tomorrow?
In J. Moore (Ed.), *Hard Choices: Moral Dilemmas in Humanitarian Intervention*, 134 -156.

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Oxfam. (1994). *Health Care for Refugees and Displaced Populations. Assessment and planning*.

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- Special Report War-crimes tribunals (2001, June 16). Judging genocide. *The Economist*, 23 – 25.
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Tharoor, S. & Johnstone, I. (1997, June). Protection and security for humanitarian workers. *DHA News*, 9 - .

Viera de Mello, S. (1997). Who cares for the carers? *DHA News*, June, 1997.

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Water and War: A symposium on water in armed conflicts.

Weinberg, J. & Simmonds, S. (1995). Public health, epidemiology and war. *Social Science and Medicine*, 40(12), 1663-1669.

Weiss, T. (1997). A research note about military-civilian humanitarianism: More questions than answers. *Disasters*, 21(2), 95-117.

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World Development Indicators. (2001). Women in development.

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