

Results: From February 2005 to October 2006, 217 participants completed the program; 117 and 100 in the years 2005 and 2006 respectively. Pre- and post-educational test results were as follows: 19 out of 117 (16.3%) and 27 out of 100 (27%) participants failed the pre-educational test in the years 2005 and 2006 respectively, while the corresponding post-educational test failure results were 3.5% and 0% respectively ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusions: A significant proportion of the participants (16.3% in 2005 and 27% in 2006) failed the pre-educational test, while the post-educational test failure rate improved significantly by dropping to less than 5%. Implementation of a continuing education program for EMS personnel on a regular basis may serve as a useful tool in facilitating skill and knowledge improvement.

Keywords: continuing education; EMS personnel; post-educational testing

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(20) Efforts Toward Increasing the Awareness of Disaster Training and Research at a University in Turkey

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A disaster due to natural, technological, or human-made hazards is destructive to people and their communities and sharply reduces social and economic well-being. Therefore, the strategy for improving disaster response should emphasize repairing and improving the social and economic status of those affected. There already are many successful programs and applications operating in Turkey. Unfortunately, trained healthcare providers equipped with appropriate knowledge, attitude, and behavioral skills regarding disaster management are lacking.

In 2006, Baskent University established a Center for Disaster Training, Research, and Implementation according to the legal regulations of the High Education Council in Turkey. The Mithat Coruh Quality Management Center collaborated with the University's Burn and Fire Disaster Institute on the establishment of this Center. The Center for Disaster Training, Research, and Implementation will train and integrate selected healthcare staff from the seven existing healthcare facilities at Baskent University. The staff will learn about disaster management topics; specifically, the preparation and dissemination of training guidelines and protocol for disaster-specific problems at the national level. The Center will collaborate with national and international disaster management centers. The successful training activities will be recommended to the University for integration into the pre-graduation program of certain educational tracks.

Keywords: disaster management; disaster training and research; education; Turkey; university programs

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(21) One Center's Experience in First-Aid Training: A Case Study in Turkey

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Introduction: After the 1999 Marmara Earthquake in Turkey, the civil initiative in first aid resulted in many incidents of severe malpractice and insufficient care. In 2002, the Turkish Government published legislation on first aid that required all first-aid responders to be certified by governmentally-approved first-aid training centers. In response to this legislation, Baskent University established a First-aid Training Center in 2004.

Methods: This Center is staffed by first-aid trainers that have certified 47 people over the duration of six courses. The eight-day, nationally-standardized course program covers topics of first aid and training, with a focus on skill improvement. Both topics, first-aid and training skills, were assessed by a pre-test that determined the baseline knowledge-level of attendees. After the course, a post-test was administered, which measured the knowledge-level and skill development of attendees.

Results: The mean value of the pretest first aid scores of the students was 80.1 ± 1.0 , while post test score were 93.4 ± 0.7 ($p < 0.05$). Of the students, a minimum of 89% were at a proficient level in 20 BLS steps. Regarding training skills, the mean value for the pretest scores was 74.4 ± 1.2 , while post-test score was 90.7 ± 0.7 ($p < 0.05$). Of the attendees, a minimum of 61% were at the proficient level in 16 presentation skill steps.

Conclusions: Given that 96% of Turkey's population lives in potential disaster areas, the importance of training first-aid responders is obvious. Turkey will persist on this well-planned and successful project until the needs of the country are satisfied.

Keywords: education; first-aid training; Marmara Earthquake; Turkey

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(22) Post-Graduate Fellowship in Emergency Medicine Disaster Preparedness: Providing Physicians with Special Training in Hospital-Based Planning and Public Health

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The significance of preparing a medical response to a disaster in the United States has become more apparent in light of a number of domestic events that have occurred in the past decade. Keeping with this trend of recent awareness, SUNY Downstate Medical Center, a large teaching hospital and medical school, and Kings County Hospital Center, a Level-1 trauma center in Brooklyn, New York have joined with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to create a disaster preparedness fellowship for physicians. This particular program is unique because it prepares physicians to be a leading force in hospital-based planning and planning within public health agencies.