Analyzing Disaster Health Information Sources: A Snapshot In Time

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OBJECTIVE

The objective of this project is to create a profile of the sources of disaster health information to illustrate the scope of this field. Because disaster-related health information comes from multiple disciplines: medicine, public health, emergency management, homeland security, etc. and is published in many places and formats, the full range of disaster health literature is not well understood.

METHODS

A profile of disaster health information sources was organized using a "mind map" approach. Sources T reviewed include publishers of disaster grey literature, journals, magazines, newsletters, blogs, news feeds, online discussion forums, databases, Web sites, training curricula, simulations, toolkits and other materials in any format. An inventory of these resources during the project period gives a "snapshot in time" of the disaster health literature for the benefit of those selecting and organizing these materials.

RESULTS

The "mind map" illustrated the complexity and exceptional variety of materials and formats of disaster health information. Because no uniform disaster health information terminology was found to guide the categorization of resources in this emerging field, categories were created to organize the information sources. Information sources were assigned into one category even though many might belong in multiple categories.

CONCLUSIONS

Disaster health information is not well-organized as a discipline. Information sources are highly diverse and difficult to find and categorize. This suggests that further work needs to be done to organize disaster health information to improve access for information users.

