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Nurses' Role in Emergency Risk Communication



Nurses are the largest occupational group in the health sector, providing frontline care, 24/24 hours, 7/7 days in a row, 365 days a year. Therefore, when designing effective preparedness strategies and to communicate with the public, nurses are ideally placed, due to the nature of their profession, to implement these strategies into the community.

Today, the EFN participated at the ECDC headquarters in Stockholm, Sweden, discussing the challenges of incorporating Emergency Risk Communication (ERC) in all aspects of public health emergency preparedness planning. The meeting brought together experts from ministries of health, public health centres, professors, epidemiologists and health professionals, highlighted the key challenges: difficulties in reaching the politicians, having the right information passing at the right time with stakeholders, health professionals, media, etc. And sometimes even if the Emergency Risk Communicators foresee what to do for a specific issue, media and authorities still find their own way around the guidelines. Therefore, the debate mainly focused on strengthening the link between ERC and public health emergency preparedness planning, in which nurses play a crucial role.



Emergency Risk Communication need to get implemented appropriately and coherently. For that it is crucial to integrate ERC into the preparedness plans, next to building and maintaining trust, and making sure that key stakeholders, frontline, get engaged in the design and support throughout the implementation. We encourage the European Commission and the WHO to substantially support nurses further in this process.

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