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Active Shooter Emergency Preparedness Planning: Nursing Homes

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Objectives

- Describe the components of a successful Active Shooter Plan.
- Identify considerations for active shooter preparedness in nursing homes.
- Identify resources to develop a robust Active Shooter Plan.

Introduction

Active Shooter Incident

- When one or more people actively engage in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area
- There is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.
- These situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly.
- Incorporating an active shooter incident plan must now be part of every health care facility's agenda and emergency management plan.

Data

- From 2000 to 2011 there were 154 hospital-related shootings.
- Multiple people can be shot within a few minutes.
- Most active shooter events are preplanned.

Active Shooter Characteristics

- Typically, active shooters may hold a grudge or have been terminated or treated harshly in the workplace.
- When a shooting incident occurs in a health care facility, it may be a spontaneous event or something that has been preplanned.

Planning for an Active Shooter Incident

Develop an Effective Emergency Action Plan

- Apply an All-Hazards risk approach.
- Identify internal and external risks that can be mitigated.
- Ensure all staff, residents, resident representatives and local law enforcement are familiar with the plan.

Components of an Effective Plan

- Risk Assessment/Vulnerability Assessment.
- Preferred method of reporting emergencies.
- Evacuation policy and procedure.
- Escape procedures and route assignments.
- Contact information for staff and residents.
- Emergency communication system to alert staff and local agencies.

Meet Everyone's Needs

Ensure active shooter plans address and provide for functional needs:

- Hearing and vision.
- Mobility.
- Limited or no English proficiency.

Lockdown Procedures

- The lockdown procedure needs to be easy to implement.
- All staff, residents and resident representatives need to be familiar the process.
- Multiple staff members should be able to initiate a lockdown.

Awareness

- Ensure all staff and residents are aware of the Active Shooter plan.
- Conduct annual training.
- Review and update annually or as needed.

Training Considerations

Training to Prepare for an Active Shooter Event

- Train employees to react quickly and appropriately in an active shooter situation.
- Train employees to decide rapidly what the safest course of action is based on the scenario that is unfolding.

Training Objectives

Training should include:

- Identifying the sound of gunfire.
- Responding quickly RUN – HIDE – FIGHT.
- Awareness of evacuation procedures/routes.
- Calling 911.
- Reacting when law enforcement arrives.
- Adopting a survival mindset.
- Involving external community organizations in training activities.

Run

- Have an escape plan in mind.
- Leave belongings behind.
- Help others, if possible.
- Evacuate, regardless of others.
- Prevent individuals from entering the facility.
- Do not move wounded people.
- Keep hands visible.
- Follow law enforcement instructions.

Hide

The hiding spot should:

- Be out of the active shooter's view.
- Provide protection if shots are fired.
- Not restrict options for movement.

Stay Safe While Hiding

If the shooter is nearby:

- Lock the door if possible.
- Use items to create a barricade.
- Hide behind large item (e.g., cabinet, desk)
- Silence cell phone/pager.
- Remain quiet.

Fight

As an absolute last resort:

- Behave as aggressively as possible.
- Throw items and use improvised weapons.
- Work together to incapacitate the shooter
- Commit to your actions.

Law Enforcement's Role

Immediate purpose:

- Stop the active shooter.
- Proceed to area where last shots heard.
- First priority is to eliminate the threat.

Communicating to Law Enforcement and 911

Provide the following information:

- Location of the shooter.
- Number of shooters.
- Physical description of shooter(s).
- Number and types of weapons.
- Number of potential victims.

Responding to Law Enforcement Officials

- Remain calm.
- Put down any items you might be holding.
- Raise hands and spread fingers.
- Avoid quick movements.
- Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling.
- Proceed in direction from which officers are entering.

Involve Outside Agencies in Training Activities

- Include the involvement of outside agencies, (such as, local law enforcement, emergency medical services [EMS] and fire department).
- Invite local law enforcement to tour your facility, offer recommendations to mitigate an active shooter event, and meet your staff and residents.

Management Responsibilities

- Institute facility access controls - lock doors.
- Distribute critical items - radios, keys.
- Assemble crisis kits with medical supplies.
- Activate emergency notification system (consider what happens after hours).
- Clearly designated and post two evacuation routes.
- Post removable floor plans near entrances/exits.
- Be aware of workplace violence indicators.

Post Active Shooter Recovery

Follow-Up Post Active Shooter Incident

- Manage consequences.
- Summarize lessons learned and improvement opportunities.

Managing the Consequences

- Determine who is missing or injured.
- Determine a method for notifying family members or resident representatives.
- Assess and support the psychological needs of staff and residents.
- Reach out to community agencies or organizations that may be able to provide assistance.
- Identify and fill critical personnel or operational gaps.
- Determine how to handle public relations and communications to public media.

Lessons Learned

- Document response activities.
- Identify successes and failures.
- Provide analysis of existing plan effectiveness.
- Document plans for improvements.
- Communicate updates to staff, residents, families and local agencies.
- Share what was learned with other organizations in the community.

Questions

Questions?

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References

- [Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Healthcare and Social Service Workers](#), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- [Physical Security, Emergency Management, and Safety](#), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- [Emergency Management Institute - Independent Study \(IS\) | IS-907 Course Materials](#), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- [Active Shooter Safety Resources](#), FBI
- [Active Shooter Response](#), StatPearls Publishing/National Library of Medicine (NIH)
- [Active Shooter - How to Respond](#), U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- [Active Shooter Emergency Action Plan Product Suite](#), Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- [Active Shooter Pocket Card](#), CISA
- [Active Shooter](#), FEMA

Emergency Preparedness Planning

- Would you like your emergency preparedness plan reviewed? Please consider completing this [short nursing home form](#).
- Upcoming Events:
 - [Nursing Home Exercise Design and Evaluation Series](#)
 - [Virtual Tabletop Emergency Preparedness Exercise](#)
- Please refer any questions to Toni Kettner, tkettner@metastar.com

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