

Physicians and practices should prepare for emergencies

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(HealthDay)—Practices and physicians should prepare for emergency

situations, such as natural disasters, network communications failures, and active shooter situations, according to an article published in *Medical Economics*.

Physicians are not as prepared to handle emergencies as they should or could be, according to a 2015 study in *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*, with less than half of practicing physicians interviewed reporting that they felt prepared to handle a natural disaster.

Practices should be prepared and not minimize the importance of emergency preparation. Developing relationships with local law enforcement agencies can help practices know who to call in a crisis. In addition, checklists and recommendations from emergency management organizations are suggested. Failing to have a comprehensive emergency plan could result in increased legal liability; insurance carriers can also help with risk assessments and staff training. After developing a plan, it's important to decide who is in charge of implementing the plan. Communication is key during an emergency, and there need to be contingency plans in case of loss of power or [communication](#) networks. Patients should be contacted during emergencies, ideally by text messaging, which is quick and effective. Finally, it is important to stay flexible and creative when responding to an [emergency situation](#).

In a statement, Molly Evans, J.D., an expert in U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services emergency preparedness rules, said: "Where I see practices being successful is when they make emergency preparation an ongoing part of their operation."

More information: [More Information](#)

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