FATALITY MANAGEMENT: PANDEMIC DEATHS IN HOSPITALS

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Safety Manager Role…

- Serve as emergency coordinator
  - Develop plans – facility and departments
  - Design and conduct drills
  - Facilitate employee education
  - Serve as liaison with the community
    - Other hospitals
    - Agencies
  - Coordinate compliance activities
Hospital Emergency Management Activities

- Increasing emphasis for the last ten years by accrediting and regulatory agencies due to:
  - Natural disasters
  - Terrorist events
  - Industrial accidents

- Specifics for communication, supplies, command structure, etc.

- Lack of direction related to fatality management
Our Plans and Processes

- **Basic Emergency Management Plan**
  - Hospital Incident Command System
  - Mass Casualty Incident Response Plan
    - Bioterrorism Response Plan
    - Plan for Influx of Infectious Patients
    - Pandemic Influenza Plan
- **Coordinate with other Infection Control, Administrative, and Nursing policies**
  - e.g., for coroner notification, care of body after death, etc.
Management of Fatalities

- **Routine single death**
  - Infectious vs. not infectious
  - Autopsy vs. no autopsy

- **Incident with mass fatalities**
  - Considerations for infectivity and autopsy
  - Morgue storage capacity issues

- **Protracted event with continued fatalities**
  - Storage capacity
  - Availability of body bags
Management of Fatalities

- Currently trying to improve the plan
- Considering purchase of more body bags
- Looking at possibilities with refrigerated trucks
- Reviewing assessment tools
- Planning to use information from the conference in next revision
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