

## **A14 The preparedness for catastrophic events**

**Leader:** John Noble

### **Objective and rationale:**

At no time in world history has the potential for catastrophic events been more real than it is today. These may take the form of natural disasters, carefully orchestrated terrorist attacks, or the simple overwhelming of care delivery capabilities in a community. This session discusses the relative responsibilities of local health care organizations, first responders and others in their surrounding communities, and national and state governments in managing major emergencies.

While response capabilities vary by individual country size, experience and resources, the common denominator of effective emergency management is necessarily the local community. For communities around the world, this means not simply the development of a "plan", but rather the creation and maintenance of a system of readiness. As will be discussed, the system capabilities must at a minimum address incident management, surge capacity, protection of direct care-givers, provision of "regularly scheduled" care, management of mental health needs, public education and engagement, and redundant communications capabilities. And these systems must be periodically tested through community-wide drills.

### **Leadership:**

**Presenter:**

Dr. Dennis O'Leary, President of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations:

**Discussants:**

Mr. Mark Ackerman, Chief Operations Officer at Saint Vincent's Hospital in New York City

Dr. Boaz Tadmor, Israeli Medical Service Department

**Moderator:**

Dr. John Noble, Consultant, Joint Commission International