

Week 6 Collaboration Cafe

a. Describe the disaster preparedness plan at your current or past workplace.

The disaster preparedness strategy at Atrium Health, where I currently work in Charlotte, North Carolina, has the objective to protect employees, guarantee patient safety, and sustain critical healthcare functions in the event of an emergency. Clear protocols have been included in the plan for dealing with various emergencies, including fires, extreme weather, incidents involving a large number of casualties, and outbreaks of infectious diseases. For instance, regular drills and simulations are used to train staff on how to react promptly and efficiently. To ensure that everyone is kept up to date during a disaster, communication is handled through the use of alert systems, emails, and internal announcements. In addition, the hospital works in collaboration with the local emergency services to guarantee an efficient response in the event of larger-scale community emergencies. Overall, the strategy is designed to ensure that activities continue to function smoothly while also giving priority to the health and safety of all those present in the facility.

b. Identify potential gaps or areas for improvement in disaster preparedness.

Although the disaster preparedness plan that Atrium Health has in place is significant, there are still a few areas in which it may be enhanced. I believe that there is a need for increased mental health care for staff during and after disasters, particularly during long-term crises such as pandemics. Healthcare professionals often suffer from extreme stress and emotional exhaustion, and here is when additional tools, such as counseling or debriefing sessions, could significantly improve performance. Another area that might use some work is the development of more individualized evacuation plans for patients who have complicated medical needs or impairments. Such measures would ensure these patients receive the appropriate care and assistance in the event of an emergency. Although communication technologies operate well in most cases, having enhanced backup plans would assist in keeping employees and patients informed in the event of a network or power outage.

c. How can you advocate for necessary changes?

One of the first things I would do to advocate for essential improvements in disaster preparedness is to gather opinions from my coworkers and