After the Big One: Hurricane Preparation and Health Relief

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Abstract
In August of 2005, Hurricane Katrina impacted over 15 million people. Devastation through population displacement, poor preparation, and water contamination directly affected a significant portion of these people’s physical and mental health. Through an in-depth evaluation of the social responses, we have developed a more adequate plan. We achieved this through an informational brochure, a post-distribution survey, and letters to companies to increase education and address regulations and policies; reducing health concerns for future hurricanes.

Problems
- Mold developed from standing water
- Generators brought inside produced a build up of carbon monoxide gas
- West Nile Virus increased due to the wet environment
- Over 11 million gallons of oil contaminated water due to poor regulations
- Lack of mental health resources

Health Effects
Mold
- Infections
- Respiratory illnesses
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning
- Sewage
- Oil Spills
Mental Illness
- Depression
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Anxiety

19.1% of recorded illnesses due to skin or wound infection
22.5% of recorded illnesses due to acute respiratory infection
37.5% prevalence of mild-moderate or serious mental illness

Methods
Informational pamphlet
- Post-distribution survey
Drafted letters to oil companies and FEMA
- Addressing regulations and policies
- Responsibility of responders

Anticipated Results
Increase:
Education among affected population
Water quality

Decrease:
Incidents of stated health problems
Oil spills

No Effect:
Immediate destruction
Weather damages
Drowning incidents

Maximizing Pamphlet Efficiency
In order to increase the number of individuals reading the pamphlet there needs to be:
- Repetitive encouragement from officials
- An incentive such as a coupon or certificate included
- Annually updated information
- A timely distribution
- Translate into multiple languages

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