UK Resilience website

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience.aspx

Various emergencies have challenged the UK in the past few years from acts of terrorism to natural catastrophes. Swine flu is currently making the news headlines, and heatwaves are forecasted to be a cause for concern in the coming years. Government aims to reduce the risk from these emergencies to allow people to continue with their business freely and confidently. This website intends to be a resource for civil protection practitioners to improve emergency preparedness to comply with the Civil Contingencies Act. The Civil Contingencies Secretariat of the Central Government’s cabinet office in partnership with other governmental departments runs the UK Resilience website.

The website is split into three main sections: emergency preparedness, emergency response and recovery and emergencies. The emergency preparedness section contains advice on the pre-emergency phase. The emergency response and recovery section contains advice on the post-emergency phase, and the emergencies section contains guidance in relation to broad classes of emergencies. These include severe weather; human health; terrorism; transport accidents; animal and plant diseases; public protest; international events causing disruption to UK services and industrial technical failures of key utilities including gas, water, electricity and telecommunications. Each section further expands into several subsections clearly covering the wider aspect of emergency management including roles and responsibilities of agencies likely to be involved in emergency response and recovery, information sharing, warning and informing public and training needs of the staff involved.

The website is kept up to date with current information on emergencies, which would be expected from a site of such nature. The section named ‘What’s new’ contains latest news, and obviously, swine flu is at the top. This topic receives updates and news feeds from UK government organizations such as the Department of Health, the Health Protection Agency and the World Health Organization, allowing the reader to find all the latest information delivered at a single page on the UK Resilience website. Of interest to occupational health practitioners is workplace guidance on pandemic influenza, with a link taking the browser to an external site.

This free-to-use website does not require registration and has invaluable resources for those involved in emergency preparation and dealing with the public. An A–Z of useful links covers an array of related websites. Navigating the site requires meticulous effort. The search function does not necessarily produce precise results, and searching for ‘coping with stress of a major incident’ did not produce any relevant results, although there was a link to the subject under the terrorism section. A noteworthy point of the website is that it is speech embedded by providing a link that takes the user to downloadable Browsealoud software, which reads the website content highlighting the words as they are read, improving accessibility.

This website is informative for practising occupational physicians and should be bookmarked by those occupational health practitioners involved in emergency planning.

Scores

Access speed—5  
Speed of searches—2  
User friendliness—2  
Links to other websites—5  
Overall score—3

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