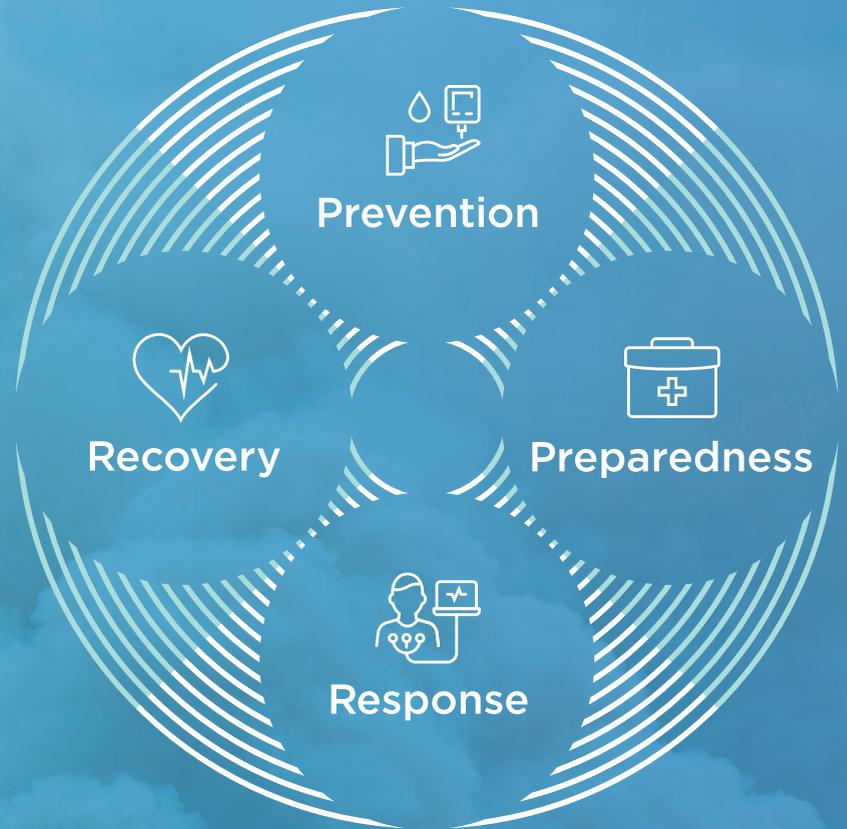


Emergency Management Cycle

Disasters can strike at any time. Physicians can play a crucial role in all stages of health emergency management.



Prevention

Interventions can help prevent emergencies, reduce the chance of them occurring, or minimize their effects. Handwashing education and routine immunization are examples of public health interventions that help prevent communicable disease outbreaks.

Preparedness

Planning and preparing to deal with emergencies in advance to ensure communities and health care facilities are able to respond when one occurs can help reduce health impacts resulting from emergencies. Physicians should be supported to participate in developing household emergency plans, business continuity plans for community-based clinics, and/or hospital plans.

Response

Responding during emergencies includes managing the immediate health impacts that may come as a result. Physicians play a critical role in providing care to patients during and immediately following emergencies at both the hospital and community levels.

Recovery

Recovering from emergencies includes seeking to restore a community back to its previous state. This includes caring for patients with mental health and trauma issues resulting from an emergency.

DOCTORS OF BC POLICY

Doctors of BC believes that physicians, working with governments and other partners, play crucial roles in health emergency management and recognizes opportunities for improved integration of both community and facility-based physicians in health emergency management activities.

To support this policy, Doctors of BC has identified the following commitments and recommendations.

Commitments

Doctors of BC commits to:

- a. Engaging physicians and collaborating with the Government of BC, including Health Emergency Management BC, health authorities, and other community partners to improve physician involvement in health emergency management planning in British Columbia.
- b. Raising physician awareness of community, provincial, and national training and leadership opportunities in health emergency management.
- c. Promoting practical resources and tools to help physicians better prepare for and respond to emergencies and support their patients in their own preparation and response.
- d. Working with continuing medical education organizations to promote training in emergency preparedness planning for physicians.

Recommendations

- a. The Government of BC, working with stakeholders and ensuring meaningful input from physicians and other health care providers, develop a provincial health emergency framework that:
 - Clarifies how the health sector, including primary and community care, fits within the context of the BC emergency management system.
 - Discusses the roles of health agencies and health care providers in health emergency management, including prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.
 - Includes in its communication strategy, multiple information and communication methods to reach all health care providers in a timely manner during emergencies.
 - Ensures the unique needs of vulnerable populations and those experiencing health inequities are specifically addressed in local, regional, and provincial health emergency response plans.
- b. All provincial, regional, and community partners engaged in emergency management provide physicians with meaningful opportunities to both participate in health emergency management planning and to provide clinical leadership at the local, regional, and/or provincial levels.