DOH Policy on Healthcare Emergency & Disaster Management for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi

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ABOUT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ABU DHABI (DOH)

The Department of Health (DOH), previously known as the Health Authority Abu Dhabi (HAAD) is the regulative body of the Health System in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and seeks excellence in Health for the community by regulating and monitoring the health status of the population. DOH shapes the regulatory framework for the health system, inspects against regulations, enforce regulations, and encourages the adoption of best practices and performance targets by all health service providers. DOH also drives programmes to increase awareness and adoption of healthy living standards among the residents of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi in addition to regulating scope of services, premiums and reimbursement rates of the health system in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

The Health System of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi is comprehensive, encompasses the full spectrum of health services and is accessible to all residents of Abu Dhabi. The health system encompasses, providers, professionals, patients, insurers and the regulator. Providers of health services include public and private services and the system is financed through mandatory health insurance (with the exception to Thiqa) and has three main sources of financing: Employers or Sponsors, the Government and Individuals. The Health Insurance scheme places responsibilities on any Insurer, Broker, Third Party Administrator, Health Provider, Employer, Sponsor (including educational establishments), Limited Income Investors and Insured Persons to participate in the Health Insurance Scheme.

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Definitions and Abbreviations

Term	Definition
Best practice	The application of the best knowledge, derived from accepted high quality research, respected expert clinical experience to achieve optimum processes and outcomes of care for patients.
Business Continuity	Measures undertaken to ensure availability of critical healthcare services and continuity of operational functions of the facility to patients, staff, regulators, and other stakeholders that must have access to those functions during Major Incidents.
Disaster	Any incident or incidents causing very serious damage, and which require the cooperation of the government and society as a whole in order to achieve recovery, and may require the support and help of the international community (NCEMA).
Emergency	Any major incident or incidents resulting in serious damage to individuals or properties, or threatens the general order, the continuity of government functions, the safety and health of the population, the environment, or threatening the economy, and which requires special mobilisation and coordination between multiple agencies.
Emergency Management	An ongoing process to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from an incident that threatens life, property, operations, or the environment.
Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)	A written plan that reflects the overall strategy, tactics, risk management, member safety and communications in the event of an incident.
Health Facility	A DOH licensed establishment where healthcare services are provided by DOH licensed healthcare professionals/providers.
Health System Stakeholders	This includes patients, health providers, health insurers, payers, national and local health regulator and other relevant entities.
Hazard Vulnerability Analysis (HVA)	Hazard Vulnerability Analysis (HVA) is a systematic approach to recognizing hazards that may affect demand for the hospitals services or its ability to provide those services. The risks associated with each hazard are analyzed to prioritize planning, mitigation, response and recovery activities. The HVA serves as a needs assessment for the Emergency and Disaster Management program.
Impact Analysis	Identification of vulnerability and assessment of consequences that may occur from sudden loss of or overwhelming of function, resources or loss of supporting infrastructure for the facility due to Major Incident/ Disaster or a threat of such.

Major Incident	An incident which overwhelms or threatens to overwhelm the resources of any healthcare facility due to its nature, type, location, severity or number of casualties involved. Such incidents require the mobilization of extraordinary resources both from the facility itself and often from elsewhere.
Mitigation	measures undertaken to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact, consequences, extent, or severity of a disaster and reduce vulnerability. In order for mitigation to be effective action needs to be taken before the disaster to reduce human and financial consequences later. Mitigation is therefore analyzing risk, reducing risk, and insuring against risk.
Policies	Refer to decisions, plans, and actions that are undertaken to achieve DOH's health care goals for Abu Dhabi. DOH's policies define a vision for the future, which in turn helps to establish targets and points of reference for the short and medium term. They outline priorities and the expected roles of different groups; and it builds consensus and informs people.
Preparedness	Preparedness is a coordinated and continuous process of planning and implementation that relies on measuring performance and taking corrective action. NCEMA defines Preparedness as the procedures related to preparing resources, capabilities, and plans to respond to emergencies, crises and disasters that might occur in the future. This stage includes developing, co-ordinating and training on the National Response Plans.
Recovery	Activities and programs designed to return conditions to a level normalcy for the facility, prior to an incident or emergency.
Response	Immediate activities, tasks, and systems to manage the effects of an incident.
Risk Assessment	The process used to determine risk management priorities by evaluating and comparing the level of risk against predetermined standards, target risk levels or other criteria.
Risk management	It is a well-known concept with related elements such as risk registry. identification, assessment, analysis of likelihood of threats or hazards and its impact/ consequence affecting the provision of healthcare and function of the facility.
Situation Analysis	The process of evaluating the severity and consequences of an incident and communicating results.
Stakeholder	Any individual, group, or organization that might affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by the incident.

Executive Summary

Emergencies, disasters and other crises majorly affect people's health, including the loss of many lives. In recent years, new threats have emerged and they reveal the challenge of managing new health risks and effects of emergencies and disasters.

Emergency preparedness is the shared responsibility of all levels of government, the private and nonprofit sectors, and individual citizens. The healthcare sector is a key player and contributes immensely to dealing with disasters. The healthcare system provides core capacities for emergency risk management for health.

Following a thorough situation analysis, DOH's position on healthcare emergency and disater management has been captured in this high-level overarching policy that sets out the vision and priority areas for the health sector to achieve the UAE government's goal to safeguard the community and the country against emergencies and disasters. The four policy priority areas defined in this document are in line with international and national recommendations:

- Mitigation and prevention.
- Preparedness.
- Response.
- Recovery measures.

DOH (previously HAAD) aims to strengthen the emergency preparedness system in Abu Dhabi to meet the wide-ranging health needs in disasters by strengthening and building the various elements needed for emergency preparedness. This overarching policy therefore sets out the objectives against each policy priority area and the strategies to achieve them. The key policy objectives identified are:

1. Clear governance with identification of roles and responsibilities.
2. Centralized data management system for emergency preparedness- related data.
3. Risk Assessment and Management mechanisms in place for the health sector.
4. A comprehensive approach to healthcare emergency preparedness.
5. An integrated health sector response to emergencies.
6. Self-monitoring and continuous improvement of health facilities emergency plans.
7. Engagement of all health system stakeholders.
8. Ensure escalation and enforcement of Healthcare Emergency Preparedness priorities as outlined in this Policy.

The health sector in Abu Dhabi is in need of clear direction to achieve these identified policy priorities and objectives. This means that DOH seeks to provide a clear road map that sets out the roles and responsibilities of all the concerned stakeholders in the health sector. It also seeks to put a robust coordination mechanism in place at the local and federal level to facilitate joint action on emergency preparedness activities. Formulation of this overarching sector wide policy on emergency and disaster management will lay the foundations of future work in this area. This will ensure that the Abu Dhabi health sector is well equipped to deal with any disaster.

1. Introduction

Federal Law by Decree No. 2 of 2011 established the National Emergency, Crises and Disasters Management Authority (NCEMA). This Law forms the legislative basis for disaster management activities within all levels of government organisations. One of the key responsibilities outlined in the law is to coordinate and cooperate in all areas of joint action in order to enhance the readiness of the UAE in the face of emergencies, crises and disasters and organise the use of all means of coordination and communication at the local and federal levels.

In line with this Law, Emergency Preparedness is among the seven priorities of Abu Dhabi's Healthcare Sector Strategy that seeks to improve healthcare in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Emergency preparedness aims to protect life and society and decrease vulnerabilities that can lead to great harm.

The UAE, like all other countries, is at the risk of being exposed to emergencies. Therefore, the need to develop a robust emergency management system is essential and health care is one of it's most vital aspects.
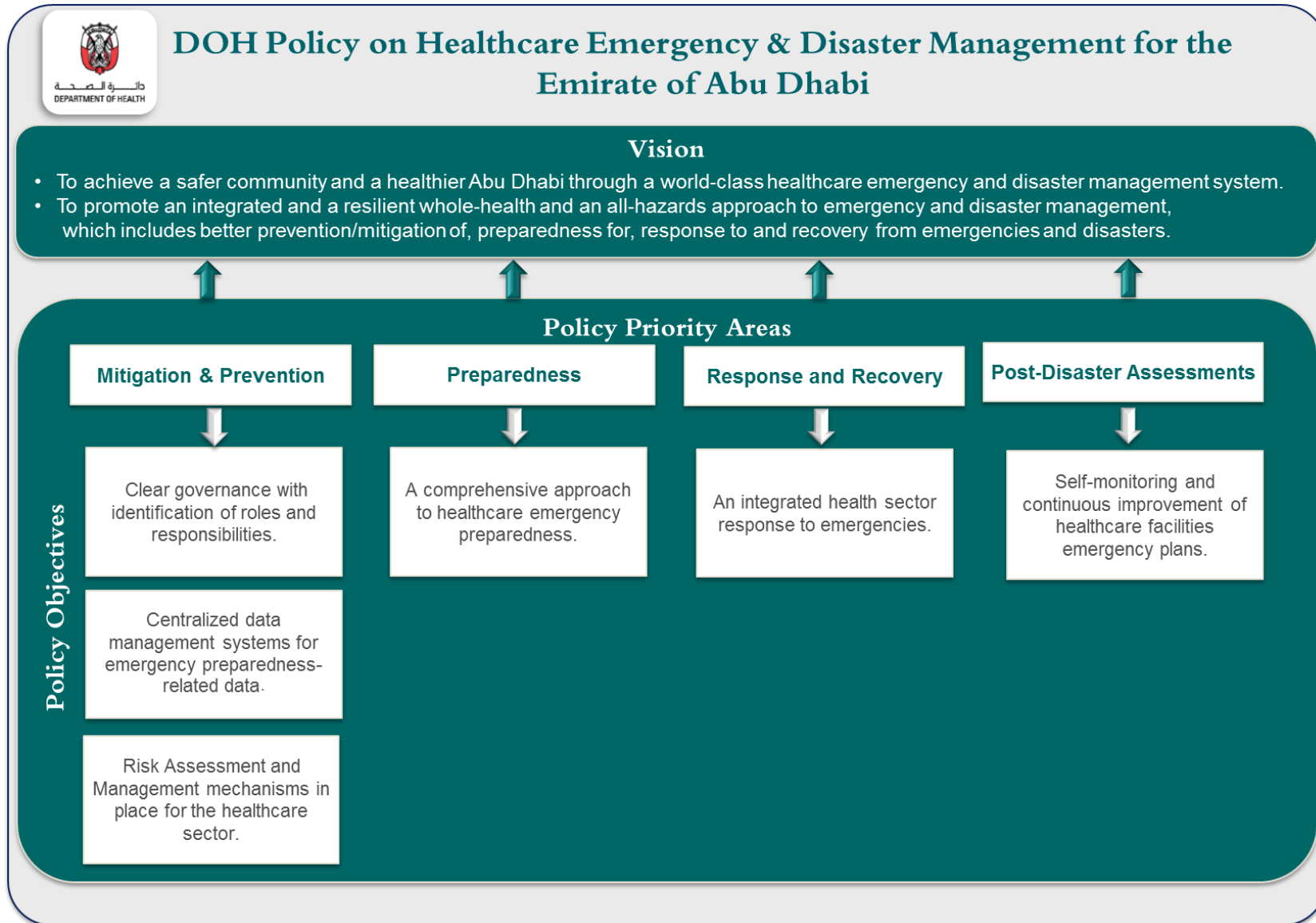
The health impact of emergencies can be significantly reduced if communities are well prepared with systematic capacities in place such as legislation, coordination procedures, and public awareness. Major emergencies also affect populations beyond immediate risks and can bring about new health challenges in the future. Thus, effective emergency management has the capacity to also reduce the level of vulnerabilities and their health implications of risk in the long term.

The Department of Health (previously Health Authority Abu Dhabi) has emphasized the need for healthcare emergency and disaster management as an Emirate-wide priority for driving overall healthcare sector improvement and for improving the readiness of the health sector to deal with all kinds of disasters. To achieve this, DOH (previously HAAD) conducted a comprehensive situation analysis including sector wide stakeholder consultations and therefore encouraged development and implementation of health sector policies, strategies and legislation to provide direction and support for Emergency Management in the health sector at the Emirate wide level.

This Policy document is structured as follows:
- Section (2) provides the purpose of this overarching policy.
- Section (3) sets out the vision and goal of this policy. It also highlights what are its key guiding principles.
- Section (4) identifies the policy objectives and strategies against the priority areas to improve emergency and disaster management, which lays the foundation for future policy work in the area of emergency and disaster management.
- Section (5) provides the implementation arrangements for the policy.

Figure 1: Overview of the DOH Policy on Healthcare Emergency & Disaster Management for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi

2. Purpose of This Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Articulate the Emirate's vision and goal for Healthcare Emergency and Disaster Management by setting out DOH's sector-wide objectives and strategies for the health services to achieve the vision and to ensure that the entire healthcare system can respond to emergencies.

- Provide the health sector with a road map to support local and federal response in times of emergencies and disasters and therefore lay the foundation for future work in this area.

3. Vision, Goal and Guiding Principles

3.1 Vision
To achieve a safer community and a healthier Abu Dhabi through a world-class healthcare emergency and disaster management system.

To promote an integrated, a resilient, whole-health, and an all-hazards approach to emergency and disaster management, which includes better prevention/mitigation of, preparedness for, response to and recovery from emergencies and disasters.

3.2 Goal
To establish a World Class Healthcare Emergency and Disaster Management System in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

3.3 Guiding Principles
The Guiding Principles to this Policy are as follows:

3.3.1 **An all-hazards approach:** is a concept acknowledging that, while hazards vary in source (natural, technological, societal), they often challenge health systems in similar ways. Thus, risk reduction, emergency preparedness, response actions and community recovery activities are implemented along the same model, regardless of the cause.

3.3.2 **Whole-health approach:** "advocates that the emergency preparedness planning process, the overall coordination procedures, surge and operational platforms are led and coordinated by an emergency coordination body at the federal and local levels, includes all relevant disciplines of the health sector and deals with all potential health risks" (WHO).

3.3.3 **A multi-sectoral coordination:** is the responsibility of all sectors at all levels both local and federal to work jointly towards risk reduction and emergency preparedness.

3.3.4 **Prepared communities:** play an important role in emergency management activities and have to be informed and up-to-date with their roles and responsibilities in emergencies.

3.3.5 **Continuous improvement:** robust emergency preparedness requires commitment to continuous improvement of policy, programmes, practices and service delivery at all levels of the government to improve community safety.

3.3.6 **Transparency through stakeholder engagement:** the commitment and active participation of all relevant stakeholders is required to advance and coordinate DOH's effort to improve overall emergency preparedness.

3.3.7 **Accountability:** all health facilities and their staff are accountable where failings and non-compliance have been identified.

3.3.8 **Evidence-based and forward-looking strategy:** implementation strategies of the policy shall be evidence-based, forward looking and taking into accounts emerging global trends and local cultural and physical needs.

3.3.9 **Context sensitive:** while taking into account best practices and existing best models for emergency preparedness, the policy and implementation of the policy shall be driven by local and regional realities and priorities.

3.3.10 **Partnership:** payers and providers (public and the private sector) shall be seen as strategic partners driving the development of this policy and its implementation.

3.3.11 **Coordination, collaboration and communication:** are critical components of effective emergency management at all levels amongst stakeholders.

4. Policy Priorities, Objectives and Strategies

4.1 Policy Priority 1: Mitigation & Prevention

DOH seeks to ensure that all healthcare facilities in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi will have minimum requirements in place for mitigation and prevention of emergencies and disasters in the health sector.

Policy objectives
  1. Clear governance with identification of roles and responsibilities.
  2. Centralized data management systems for emergency preparedness-related data.
  3. Risk Assessment and Management mechanisms in place for the health sector.

Objective 1: Clear governance that ensures support and commitment of the leadership towards robust healthcare emergency and disaster management in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

Strategy 1: Set out the governance framework with roles and responsibilities for the entire healthcare sector to ensure that executive support and commitment to emergency and disaster management is achieved.

4.1.1   DOH shall:

4.1.1.1 Drive the development and implementation of multi-sectoral health policies, standards and guidelines to provide direction and support to the Abu Dhabi health sector for emergency and disaster management priorities in accordance with Federal and Abu Dhabi Laws.

4.1.1.2 Seek to enhance disaster prevention and mitigation activities in the Abu Dhabi Emirate by ensuring allocation of dedicated resources to emergency and disaster management priorities.

4.1.1.3 Ensure clear and transparent decision making on Emergency and Disaster Management through stakeholders' collaboration and cooperation.

4.1.1.4 Supervise the health sectors development of capacity and capabilities in emergency and disaster management in accordance with the requirements as set out by DOH and NCEMA.

4.1.1.5 Implement effective governance through sound performance management and continuous improvement of emergency preparedness frameworks.

4.1.2   All DOH licensed healthcare facilities shall:

4.1.2.1   Ensure that their actions to drive Emergency Preparedness are in accordance with Federal and Abu Dhabi laws and regulations.

4.1.2.2   Ensure consistent compliance with regulations and requirements as set out by DOH towards emergency and disaster management priorities.

4.1.2.3   Ensure that internal executive support and commitment to emergency and disaster management priorities is achieved within their organisations.

4.1.2.4   Integrate effective emergency preparedness initiatives into their organisational, strategic and corporate plans that shall include:

4.1.2.4.1 Business continuity plans

4.1.2.4.2 Emergency and Disaster preparedness and response system

4.1.2.4.3 Risk Management

4.1.2.4.4 Workplace Health and Safety in accordance with Abu Dhabi Occupational Safety and Health Management System (OSHAD) requirements.

4.1.2.4.5 Environmental Health and Safety

4.1.2.4.6 Chemical, Biological, Radiation and Nuclear Management

4.1.2.4.7 Prevention and Control of infection and outbreaks.

Objective 2: A collaborative, evidence-based and a centralised data management system for emergency and disaster management related data.

Strategy 2: Set out the requirements for health care facilities and DOH to ensure that the policy objective for centralised data management for emergency and disaster management related data is achieved.

4.1.3 DOH shall:

4.1.3.1 Seek to enhance the system of data management on healthcare emergency and disaster management in collabration with all relevant stakeholders as per DOH's defined Data Standards.

4.1.3.2 Develop baseline data, norms, standards and information on health sector risk reduction and emergency preparedness.

4.1.3.3 Establish a common IT infrastructure to enable exchange of information among relevant healthcare entities.

4.1.3.4 Define the methods and frequency to report the data on emergency preparedness and shall identify the system to be implemented.

4.1.3.5 Capture lessons learnt and incorporate data collected and analysed on emergency preparedness into effective policy and practice. DOH shall also determine what information can be made available to public and stakeholders to enhance the work of emergency planners and responders.

4.1.3.6 Define all information security measures required to maintain patient information confidentiality.

4.1.3.7 Develop risk registries at all levels of the healthcare emergency and disaster management system that clearly identify risks and vulnerabilities in the community.

4.1.4 All DOH licensed healthcare facilities shall:

4.1.4.1 Adopt DOH's defined standards related to data management and emergency and disaster management.

4.1.4.2 Acquire the resources deemed necessary or use existing ones to be able to comply with DOH standards related to data exchange.

4.1.4.3 Establish processes and procedures required to collect all the data on emergency preparedness.

4.1.4.4 Report the data to DOH on emergency preparedness as per DOH's defined methods and frequency.

4.1.4.5   Comply with DOH-defined information security measures required to maintain patient information confidentiality.

4.1.4.6   Contribute data to the risk registries as defined by DOH to ensure clear identification of risks and vulnerabilities in the community.

4.1.4.7   Capture lessons learnt during emergency exercises or real life events and incorporate data collected and analysed on emergency preparedness into effective policy and practice.

Objective 3: Health sector mechanisms to assess and manage the risks to health and health systems and develop safer and sustainable communities.

Strategy 3: Set out the requirements for health care facilities and DOH to have early warning instruments in place.

4.1.5   DOH shall:

4.1.5.1   Align the healthcare multi-agency emergency management planning processes including risk assessment.

4.1.5.2   Execute and administer federal level priorities to foster a unified system for emergency and disaster management.

4.1.5.3   Set out the requirements for the healthcare facilities to develop programs, arrangements or measures where appropriate, aimed at mitigating risks from all hazards.

4.1.5.4   Maintain survelliance systems to detect and monitor outbreaks of any public health emergencies.

4.1.5.5   Conduct risk assessments, including those affecting critical infrastructure, within or related to their area of responsibility, based on all-hazards risk analysis and risk assessment methodology.

4.1.5.6   Define the risk assessment methodology applicable to the local context to guide the health sector on which methodology to implement.

4.1.5.7   Seek to have in place surveillance and monitoring of potential threats to health using elements like:
         4.1.5.7.1   Hazard Vulnerability Analysis (HVA)
         4.1.5.7.2   Capacity Analysis
         4.1.5.7.3   Impact Analysis
         4.1.5.7.4   Risk Assessments

4.1.6   All DOH licensed healthcare facilities shall:

4.1.6.1   Ensure compliance with DOH requirements for planning processes including risk assessment and exercising.

4.1.6.2   Develop programs, arrangements or measures, where appropriate, aimed at mitigating risks from all hazards as directed by DOH, OSHAD and relevent local and fedral authorities.

4.1.6.3   Report data to DOH as part of the surveillance systems to detect and monitor outbreaks of any public health emergencies.

4.1.6.4   Conduct periodic risk assessments and ensure compliance with DOH requirements of an all-hazards risk analysis and risk assessment methodology.

4.1.6.5　　Have in place early warning surveillance and monitoring systems to be able to identify potential threats to health using elements like:

    4.1.6.5.1　　Hazard Vulnerability Analysis (HVA)

    4.1.6.5.2　　Capacity Analysis

    4.1.6.5.3　　Impact Analysis

    4.1.6.5.4　　Risk Assessments

4.2　　Policy Priority 2: Preparedness

DOH seeks to ensure that all healthcare facilities in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi will have minimum requirements in place for emergency preparedness.
Policy objectives A comprehensive approach to healthcare emergency preparedness.

Objective 4: Adherence of healthcare facilities to a comprehensive approach to healthcare emergency preparedness.

Strategy 4.1: Set out the requirements for healthcare facilities to ensure relevant, frequently tested and up to date emergency disaster plans are in place.

4.2.1　DOH shall:

4.2.1.1　　Develop emergency plans for the health sector in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Response Plan and federal level plans to effectively respond to all emergencies.

4.2.1.2　　Establish Abu Dhabi wide hospital preparedness programmes and ensure hospital emergency response plans availability as per DOH requirments.

4.2.1.3　　Set the requirements for and have a process in place to test the emergency preparedness plans for the healthcare sector.

4.2.1.4　　Have a process in place to keep the emergency preparedness plans for the healthcare sector up to date.

4.2.1.5　　Incorporate in the emergency preparedness planning process, lessons learned and best practices derived from the conduct of actual events, training and exercises.

4.2.1.6　　Ensure sustainable capacity to meet the goals outlined in emergency preparedness plans, based on priorities, needs analysis and capability requirements.

4.2.1.7　　Conduct or participate in exercises to test and implement emergency preparedness plans and participate in training with respect to emergency preparedness planning.

4.2.1.8　　Include in the emergency preparedness plans and programs, arrangements or other measures to provide for business continuity.

4.2.1.9　　Provide post-exercise and post-event feedback related to the Abu Dhabi Response Plan or federal emergency plans in accordance with the guidelines and improvement process provided to relevant local and federal entities.

4.2.2   All DOH licensed healthcare facilities shall:

4.2.2.1   Comply with any standards issued by DOH in relation to emergency healthcare management.
4.2.2.2   Develop preparedness programmes and emergency response plans for their facilities to effectively respond to all emergencies in alignment with DOH requirements.
4.2.2.3   Ensure compliance with DOH requirements to have a process in place to test their individual and wider health sector emergency preparedness plans.
4.2.2.4   Have a process in place to keep their emergency preparedness plans up to date.
4.2.2.5   Ensure sustainable capacity to meet the goals outlined in emergency preparedness plans, based on priorities, needs analysis and capability requirements as defined by DOH, OSHAD and relevent local and fedral authorities.
4.2.2.6   Conduct or participate in routine exercises to test and implement emergency preparedness plans and participate in training with respect to emergency preparedness planning involving its staff.
4.2.2.7   Incorporate lessons learned and best practices derived from the conduct of actual training, exercises and events in the emergency healthcare management planning process.
4.2.2.8   Include in their emergency preparedness plans and programs, arrangements, or other measures to provide for business continuity of their operations in line with the guidelines and best practices recommended by DOH and NCEMA.

Strategy 4.2: Set out the requirements for all healthcare facilities to build, maintain and develop resources, capacity and capability in emergency management in the health sector.

4.2.3   DOH shall:

4.2.3.1   Establish and maintain strategic stockpile of critical medical products at strategic sites for the Emirate.
4.2.3.2   Maintain surveillance systems to detect and monitor outbreaks of disease after any public health emergency.
4.2.3.3   Set out the requirements for hospital's design and construction to be retro-fitted and disaster resilient.
4.2.3.4   Promote capability and capacity for risk reduction and emergency preparedness in the healthcare sector.
4.2.3.5   Ensure that the healthcare sector builds technical skills within all health disciplines involved in emergency preparedness and response through sound and credible training and educational material.
4.2.3.6   Ensure that overall standards of training are identified and disseminated to all parts of the healthcare system and that training takes into account the guiding principles of this policy.
4.2.3.7   Ensure that the training is delivered through realistic exercises and drills, including those done in cooperation with other local and federal entities as directed by DOH.
4.2.3.8   Set out the requirements for the healthcare facilities to establish clear communication protocols in case of emergency and disaster or major incident in the healthcare facilities.

4.2.4   All DOH licensed healthcare facilities shall:

    4.2.4.1   Develop surge capacity to manage a significant increase in the number of patients during emergencies.

    4.2.4.2   Develop a general operational plan for managing critical areas of operations such as supplies, staff availability, coordination and communication capability, contingencies, business continuity and the availability of backup systems in the event of emergencies.

    4.2.4.3   Conduct a Hazard Vulnerability Analysis (HVA) / Risk Assessment to allow the early identification of any hazards or risks that might result in compromising the operational functions of the Hospital or the delivery of its core healthcare services.

    4.2.4.4   Ensure that their hospital's design and construction are retro-fitted and disaster resilient as required by DOH.

    4.2.4.5   Build technical skills within all health disciplines invloved in emergency management and response through sound and credible training and educational material.

    4.2.4.6   Ensure compliance with overall standards of emergency management-related training for health care staff as mandated by DOH, OSHAD and NCEMA.

    4.2.4.7   Organise and/or ensure participation in emergency preparedness related exercises and drills, including those done in cooperation with other local and federal entities as directed by DOH.

    4.2.4.8   Establish clear hospital emergency communication protocols in complaince with DOH requirements.

    4.2.4.9   Collaborate with relevent stakeholders to implement changes, based on lessons learned and best practices derived from conducting training and exercises.

4.3   Policy Priority 3: Response and Recovery

DOH seeks to ensure that all healthcare facilities in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi will have minimum requirements in place for response to and recovery from emergencies.
Policy objectives An integrated health sector response to emergencies.

Objective 5: An integrated health sector response to emergencies that is consistent with the overall local and federal response plans and coordination mechanisms in place.

Strategy 5.1: Set the requirements for healthcare facilities to comply with Abu Dhabi wide standardized approach to emergency management and response.

 4.3.1 DOH shall:

    4.3.1.1   Lead the health sectors emergency response actions in the advent of any emergency and have a robust incident command system in place.

    4.3.1.2   Direct and coordinate the response of the healthcare sector in Abu Dhabi in coordination with other relevant government entities and agencies at the Emirate or Federal level in the advent of any emergency.

4.3.1.3   Direct the mobilisation of healthcare resources to the emergency site and the initiation of prioritised patient management.

4.3.1.4   Direct providers to provide the healthcare services necessary to respond to and recover from the emergency.

4.3.1.5   Ensure that the healthcare facilities have an incident command system in place as per DOH requirements.

4.3.1.6   Provide direction to the healthcare facilities in developing a robust incident command system.

4.3.1.7   Establish a unified emergency color coding system across healthcare facilities.

4.3.1.8   Establish a unified incident leveling system across healthcare sector (alert, standby, declare, and all clear).

4.3.2 All DOH licensed healthcare facilities shall:

4.3.2.1   Ensure full compliance with the DOH incident management system in the advent of any emergencies or disasters.

4.3.2.2   Have a Hospital Incident Command System in place in compliance with DOH requirements.

4.3.2.3   Support DOH when requested in the advent of an emergency or disaster.

Strategy 5.2: Ensure processes are in place to promote effective communication and coordination in the health sector to ensure effective collaboration and timely decisions throughout all stages of an emergency.

4.3.3 DOH shall:

4.3.3.1   Direct and coordinate the communication with the public during initial response and subsequent recovery periods.

4.3.3.2   Direct and coordinate the communication with the healthcare providers during initial response and subsequent recovery periods.

4.3.3.3   Set out the requirements for the healthcare facilities to establish clear communication protocols.

4.3.4 All DOH licensed healthcare facilities shall:

4.3.4.1   Ensure compliance with the requirements from DOH to establish clear communication protocols.

Strategy 5.3: Ensure that all healthcare facilities have plans in place for continuity of their operations.

4.3.5 DOH shall:

4.3.5.1   Ensure creation of systems for prevention and recovery to deal with potential threats to the health sector.

4.3.5.2   Set out the requirements for the health sector to establish business continuity plans.

4.3.5.3   Ensure compliance of all healthcare facilities with the requirements from DOH to establish business continuity plans to ensure readiness to deal with emergencies.

4.3.5.4   Ensure continuity of critical services during Major Incidents/Disasters of healthcare facilities as per DOH requirments .

4.3.6 All DOH licensed healthcare facilities shall:

4.3.6.1   Ensure availability of critical healthcare services and continuity of operational functions of the facility to patients, staff, regulator and other entities that must have access to those functions during Major Incidents.

4.3.6.2   Apply Business Continuity principles to Emergency Planning and that should form part of the facility's plan, must carry senior executive responsibility and have a framework to understand and manage all aspects of supply chain, maintain critical services, mutual aid, evacuation, deliver training, audit and performance manage.

4.3.6.3   Identify assets needed to maintain critical services for 24 hours, for 72 hours and for 1 week.

4.3.6.4   Establish agreements and contracts, with providers, suppliers and with other facilities to establish continuity in critical care with focus on workforce, infrastructure, IT & telecommunications, utilities, and supplies. Determine how the above relationships with key stakeholders will be managed at the onset and during the disruption.

4.3.6.5   Quantify timeframes of return to normal activity following disruption for each critical service, the maximum period for which disruption can be tolerated with and without additional available resources mobilized, dependencies, critical objectives, and resources needed over time to maintain critical services within maximum tolerable limits.

4.3.6.6   Take account of services or activities that critical services depend upon.

4.3.6.7   Take into account events where staff of the facility could be affected by the Incident or staff deserting the area in light of a perceived threat.

4.3.6.8   Set alerting mechanisms to activate continuity plan, mobilize resources and alert stakeholders.

4.3.6.9   Develop plans to decant to alternative location and continue provision of services when facility or parts of facility are affected.

4.4   Policy Priority 4: Post-Disaster Assessments

DOH seeks to ensure that all healthcare facilities in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi will have a structured approach for continuous improvement processes related to emergency management programs.
Policy objectives   Self-monitoring and continuous improvement of health facilities emergency plans.

Objective 6: Healthcare facilities to monitor and continuously improve their emergency plans.

Strategy 6: Set out the requirements for all healthcare facilities to have plans in place for post incident review and evaluations of their emergency management plans.

4.4.1   DOH shall:

4.4.1.1   Ensure all healthcare facilities have robust and frequently tested emergency preparedness plans in place for the purpose of post-disaster evaluations.

4.4.1.2   Undertake comprehensive review and evaluation of emergency management plans for the health sector though testing, monitoring, auditing, and continuous improvement processes.

4.4.1.3   Undertake post-recovery analysis and incorporate lessons learned and best practices into emergency management plans.

4.4.1.4   Apply and implement changes, as well as collaborate with stakeholders to implement changes, based on lessons learned and best practices derived from the conduct of training and exercises as well as from response and recovery experiences.

4.4.2   All DOH licensed healthcare facilities shall:

4.4.2.1   Ensure compliance with the requirements from DOH to conduct post-recovery analysis and incorporate lessons learned and best practices into emergency preparedness plans.

4.4.2.2   Provide DOH with copies of their emergency management plans for the purpose of post-disaster evaluations.

4.4.2.3   Link emergency management improvement efforts with the facility quality improvement processes as per DOH Policy for Quality and Patient safety and OSHAD continual improvement process as per OSHAD SF requirements, including a periodic review of the effectiveness of Emergency and Disaster Management programs and corrective action plans.

5. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Objective 7: Engagement of all health system stakeholders.

Strategy 7: Set out the roles and responsibilities for the health system stakeholders to fullfill their commitment towards emergency preparedness priorities as set out by DOH.

5.1.1 DOH shall:

    5.1.1.1   DOH is responsible of regulating the health system and ensure all regulatory provisions are enabled to address service gaps, inefficiencies, malpractice or unfairness.

    5.1.1.2   DOH is responsible for having in place governance measures to ensure the safety of the patients and readiness of the health sector in the advent of any emergency.

    5.1.1.3   DOH will provide the necessary stewardship, ensure that the requirements set out in this Policy are met through its regulatory powers and where necessary, set out further regulatory measures to address the current and future health system needs for emergency preparedness.

5.1.2 Healthcare Providers:

    5.1.2.1   Healthcare providers must take on a robust approach to meet the requirements as set out by DOH to ensure safety and wellbeing of the patients and continuity of service delivery in the advent of any emergency.

    5.1.2.2   Healthcare providers must put in place effective preventive arrangements as outlined in this policy to strengthen delivery of appropriate care to patients affected during and after an emergency. Furthermore, business continuity plans must also be in place to ensure services are not disrupted when they are most needed.

    5.1.2.3   When applicable, healthcare providers are responsible and accountable for their effective response to emergencies and ensuring that they comply with the DOH directions set out in this policy and that relevant UAE rules and regulations are met.

5.1.3 Health Insurers:

    5.1.3.1   Health Insurers are responsible for ensuring the requirements set out in this policy and relevant UAE rules and regulations are met.

    5.1.3.2   Health insurers must take steps to ensure that they are ready to provide information, assistance and advice and take any other actions as deemed necessary by DOH in the advent of an emergency.

5.2 Escalation and Enforcement

Objective 8: Ensure escalation and enforcement of Healthcare Emergency Preparedness priorities as outlined in this Policy.

Strategy 8: Set out DOH approach for escalation and enforcement to ensure compliance with this Policy.

5.2.1   DOH shall:

5.2.1.1   Escalate and take all appropriate actions where it determines that a breach of duty has occurred.

5.2.1.2   Exercise its powers in a flexible manner to ensure that regulatory action is targeted where it is needed.

5.2.1.3   Bring to an end any failure to comply with this Policy.

5.2.1.4   Prevent any such failure from being repeated in the future.

5.2.1.5   Restore the situation (as far as possible) to what it would have been if the failure had not occurred.

5.2.1.6   Administer its investigative process in order to determine any breach of Laws or Regulations. Where a breach has been determined, DOH will undertake the necessary escalation procedures. Once DOH has undertaken its investigation appropriate enforcement will be subject to DOH's determination of the level of breach or non-compliance and may include the following measures with specified timescales for compliance and/or action:

5.2.1.6.1   Provide advice

5.2.1.6.2   Set out a remedial action plan

5.2.1.6.3   Refer the matter to the Competent Committee with a view to:

5.2.1.6.4   Issue a reprimand, notice or warning

5.2.1.6.5   Issue notice of suspension

5.2.1.6.6   Withdrawal of licensure

5.2.1.6.7   Recommend legal proceedings

5.2.1.6.8   Any other appropriate action

The healthcare facility, professional or insurer may seek to appeal a DOH decision subject to satisfying the requirements of DOH appeal grounds, rules and process.

5.3   Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation framework shall be developed to monitor the implementation and impact of this Policy.