

NOTES

RESEARCH ON DELIVERY OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The Disaster Research Center (DRC) of The Ohio State University has been awarded a grant by the National Institute of Health of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare to study “The Delivery of Emergency Medical Services in Disasters.”

DRC will conduct systematic and comparative field studies of the delivery of emergency medical services (EMS) in the United States and Canada in major and relatively sudden disasters (i.e., any kind of natural, technological or civil crisis situation eventuating in a large number of casualties). The objectives of the research are to establish the nature and parameters of the conditions for, characteristics of, and consequences from the efforts to provide EMS in turbulent social environments such as catastrophes and collective crisis situations.

Building on earlier DRC exploratory work, an effort will be made to answer the following questions: (1) what are the pre- and trans-disaster factors that affect the nature and pattern of disaster-related EMS? (2) what are the characteristics of the EMS delivered in disasters, i.e., by whom, what, for whom, how, why and where are EMS provided by the health care delivery system in disasters, and (3) what are some of the more important differential effects, internal to the health care delivery system, resulting from the delivery of EMS in disasters?

Several dozen health care delivery systems will be studied through a combination of intensive interviewing, participant observations, and the gathering of statistical and documentary data. The empirically based findings should

have important implications for general EMS training and education, and will suggest guidelines for the planning of the organization and delivery of disaster related EMS.

The study, which will also involve medical and nursing personnel, will be directed by Professor Russell R. Dynes and Professor E.L. Quarantelli, the DRC Co-Directors. Further information about the research can be obtained from them at the Disaster Research Center, 127–129 West 10th Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43201 U.S.A.

SOCIAL RESEARCH ON EARTHQUAKE PREDICTION

A National Science Foundation funded research project entitled “The Socioeconomic and Political Consequences of Earthquake Prediction” is under way at the Institute of Behavioural Science at the University of Colorado, Boulder. A multi-disciplinary team, including sociologists, political scientists, economists, seismologists, and engineers has been formed to investigate the responses of different types of organizations and of citizens in earthquake hazard areas to early credible earthquake forecasts. The technology to predict the time, place and severity of earthquakes is advancing at a rapid pace. But earthquake forecasts could help reduce losses only if realistic plans for coping with earthquakes are developed. The projected research is intended to provide public officials and agencies with informed estimates of probable consequences and advisable courses of action.

The research for this project will be conducted in California, where in-depth discussions will be held with representatives of seismological groups;

mass media news agencies; organizations responsible for public health, safety and welfare; and a wide range of business groups. Preliminary contacts with California state agencies and business organizations have already been initiated. Cooperation has been excellent.

The research findings will be made available to relevant state and federal agencies and private organizations. It is expected that the results of the research will point out needed changes in public policies on earthquake prediction. The researchers will work closely with disaster preparedness agencies and legislative committees to ensure that needed changes are recognized and applied.

The research project is headed by Professor J. Eugene Haas of the University of Colorado's Institute of Behavioural Science, and Professor Dennis S. Mileti of Colorado State University. Further

information about the work can be obtained from Professor Haas at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado 80302, U.S.A.

NEW RESEARCH, TRAINING AND PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Anyone initiating new research, training programs, planning efforts or related activities in the mass disaster area is invited to submit brief statements about such matters. Information should be concise, but should include names and addresses where interested persons can obtain more information. Items should be sent to the University Center for Urban Research, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260, U.S.A. Submitted material is subject to condensation because of space limitations.