

ASC Evacuation Research: Return and Recovery

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Overview

- Wrap up for ASC-funded research on mass evacuation for people with disabilities
 - Activities and deliverables
- Grant opportunities in the near future that can support further research in the area of mass evacuation

ASC Research Activities

- Established an Advisory Board 7 academic collaborators that were part of the funding proposal, and eleven organizational and government partners, people with disabilities, disability advocacy organizations.
- Roundtable presentations on Communication and Alert (14 June 2022), Transportation (14 June 2022), and Return & Recovery (17 April 2023).

The literature: Connected communities enhance resilience

- Much of the literature is international, largely American.
- There are similar concerns for public safety between mandating an evacuation and announcing the return to a community .
- People with disabilities / caregivers have unique requirements: access to assistive devices and equipment, access to utilities and telecommunications, considerations for service animals.
- Insurance /disaster relief processes need to be clear and user-friendly. Programs can duplicate efforts or conflict with each other
- Disasters accentuate impacts for people with mental illnesses and cause new cases of mental illness, impacting health and economic well-being.

The surveys: Top concern is to address damage, reliance on insurance coverage

- Top concerns with return to community relate to addressing damage and debris, restoring utilities and access to necessities (e.g., safe food and water), and ensuring caregivers are supported appropriately
- 90% of survey respondents (people with disabilities and caregivers) have not experienced an evacuation, which poses challenges to emergency managers
- Respondents depend on insurance to recover and replace lost or damaged property; people have different types of coverage and may not be able to pay out-of-pocket expenses
- Emergency managers need to know what people with disabilities require to ensure their residences are accessible and operational following a disaster

Recommendations

- Emergency response decision-makers need to know what residents require to ensure a residence is safe, accessible, and operational according to the needs of the residents.
- Provide opportunities for people with disabilities, caregivers, and emergency managers to engage directly with emergency planning.
- Support care givers to ensure they can complete return and recovery tasks (e.g., repair work, insurance processes, clearing damage or debris).
- People with disabilities need to know what they are responsible for, how to connect with necessary services, what their expectations for support should be

Recommendations

- Provide clear and accessible insurance and disaster relief funding processes, and support to navigate them. Many people may not be aware of the specifics of their coverage. Ensure processes are adaptable and agile to respond to needs.
- Ensure roles and responsibilities for return and recovery tasks following an emergency evacuation are well known and communicated in advance of an emergency.
- Understanding how demographic changes and government policies are changing the context. For example, more people with disabilities and seniors are living at home; rates of disability increase as the population ages.

Discussion Questions

- How do we capture the intersectional nature of risk and make progress (e.g., age, race, gender, ability, Indigeneity, income, English proficiency, religion), also meeting needs of rural and urban communities?
- What are key insurance and disaster relief funding concerns pertaining to people with disabilities and caregivers?
- What is needed to establish an appropriate context to enable evacuation training for return and recovery, especially in a way that proactively addresses potential panic? How do we improve engagement with people with disabilities and caregivers in advance of an emergency?
- What tools and resources can be developed from this information? What would be most helpful?

Deliverables

Papers and Briefing Notes	Events
<p>Communication/Alert <u>Paper</u> and <u>Briefing Note</u></p> <p>Transportation <u>Paper</u> and <u>Briefing Note</u></p> <p>1. <u>Journal Publication</u></p> <p>Return and Recovery Paper and Briefing Note</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drafted, soon to be published on MacEachen Website	<p>Panel: <u>Come Hell or High Water: Improving Emergency Response for People with Disabilities</u></p> <p>Panel: <u>After Popular Attention Washes Away: Check-in Post-Fiona</u></p>
Op-ed	
<p><u>Fiona: People with disabilities need more support in extreme storms</u></p> <p><i>The Conversation</i></p>	

Conference Presentations

- Dr. Katie Aubrecht and Mary Jane Kelly presented a paper during the virtual session of the Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability and Diversity (7 November 2022)
- Kaitlynnne Lowe presented a paper during the Canadian Association for Programs in Public Administration conference (23 June 2023).
- Dr. Kevin Quigley presented a paper during the Society for Risk Analysis Europe (20 June 2023).