

# Disaster Down Under

## ABSTRACT

Disaster Down Under aims to raise awareness of the issues faced in a disaster situation involving multiple burn casualties. Participants act in various roles in the management of casualties in a virtual environment.

## KEYWORDS

Disaster management; Burns assessment teams

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## DESCRIPTION

The *Disaster Down Under* eSim is set in outback Australia and has been built from lessons learnt in the response to the Bali bombings of 2002. Participants assume the role of a stakeholder in the management of a disaster involving multiple burn casualties. They are allocated a role with particular objectives and responsibilities. The aim is to raise their awareness of the issues faced in a disaster situation involving multiple burn casualties and it is intended to be as realistic as possible.

## AUDIENCE/GROUP SIZE

The audience are students of The University of Adelaide's Graduate Diploma in Nursing Science (Burns Nursing). Group size varies from 6-12 students.

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students are expected to gain an understanding of:

- The definition of a disaster
- Asset management in a mass casualty situation
- The principles of triage
- The Australian National Burn Disaster Plan (AUSBURNPLAN)
- The role of the National Burn Network (NBN) and Emergency Management Australia (EMA)
- The composition and role of a Burn Assessment Team
- The type of psychological resources provided to patients and their families against the timeline of the burn injury
- Physical and psychological stressors placed on the burns nurse
- Strategies to deal with stressors.



The e-Sim process provides an opportunity for participants to:

- Work with students from other clinical specialties in a professionally relevant context
- Gain a perspective on working professionally within a national context
- Develop awareness of different perspectives about an issue
- Integrate skills into action: negotiation, computer literacy, problem solving and teamwork
- Practice with procedures/protocols
- Develop awareness of different organisations and their roles and responsibilities.

## RESOURCES

- Articles on various disasters, the treatment of burns in disaster situations, and models of nursing in disaster situations
- Links to the Emergency Management Australia website, the Disaster & Emergency Medicine Project, Australian Health Disaster Management Policy Committee (AHD-MPC), a YouTube Video of the Bradford Stadium Fire, and to the subject guides at the University Library
- Information on how to use the discussion boards.

## ASSESSMENT

Students are assessed using the following:

1. Participation level on discussion board
2. Short summary paper of each e-Sim phase
3. Final summary paper

## FACILITATOR ISSUES

Monitoring the discussion boards can be quite time consuming depending on group size and activity levels.

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Activities are divided into three phases:

1. Response Planning
2. Incident Management
3. Post Incident Management.

There are six roles:

1. Burns Assessment Team Nurse
2. Clinical Nurse Adult
3. Nurse Unit Manager
4. Clinical Nurse Consultant Paediatric
5. Burns Assessment Team Nurse Paediatric
6. Nurse in Charge Surgical Ward.

A video clip (or audio and photo for dial-up users) is used to present each scenario to participants.

Acting in their role, students are asked to either:

- Select a response option for which automatic feedback is given, or
- Discuss their response on the discussion board.

The screenshot shows a slide from a simulation titled "Stage 1 Planning Phase". It features a video player with a "Dial up audio only" label. The video shows a man in a suit speaking. To the right of the video, there is a text block: "I've had a phone call from the DHS to tell us that there's been an explosion up in Lyme Gap. There's going to be at 10 at least large burns patients coming down to us. We don't know exact numbers, we've decided to send the burns assessment team up there to assist with their evacuation. You have to make preparations for receiving all the patients and get ready with the theatres and everything that were going to be able to look after these patients. We have experience with this before and we re going to make sure that we run it properly." Below the video and text, it says "This has now raised a number of issues that you need to clarify:" and "Please move to the next slide for directions."

Delivery is via the online site and weekly sessions in a live online classroom. Students complete their responses as preparation for discussion in the scheduled online classroom session. The scenario snapshot helps to provide contextual awareness of one or more issues to be addressed at each phase. The discussion board activities encourage participants to explore these issues and may also require further research e.g. investigating and analysing the existence or adequacy of processes in their own hospital setting.

## REUSABILITY

This e-sim could be adapted for use by many other groups, probably most easily adapted for other nursing groups, but also has potential across disciplines and for use in mixed professional groups.

## REFERENCES AND LINKS

A sample scenario for the Clinical Nurse Consultant Burns Unit Trauma Hospital (Adult Unit) can be accessed at <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/situationallearning/examples/>.