National Health Operations Centre (NHOC).

Emergency plans & actions

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The need for health crisis management

- International and regional events with health impact
- Health threats and challenges
- Growing and migrating populations
- Climate changes
- Dynamic nature of the Healthcare field
The necessity for a health crisis center in Greece

- Natural disasters (earthquakes)
- Climate changes (forest fires, floods)
- Communicable diseases, especially zoonoses
- Illegal migration
- Need for broad health coverage of the population

Health crises may happen and the nation must be prepared to manage them accordingly
Basic features of health crisis management

- Preparedness
- Knowledge on possible health threats
- Organization of operational and strategic plans
- Cooperation with other nations in crisis management
- Technological support
Basic characteristics of healthcare managers

- Familiarity with the health sector
- Team leadership
- Broad spectrum knowledge
- Constant update
- Proper operational planning
- Strategic thought and action
- Social sensibility and humanity
- Communication skills
The National Health Operations Center was founded in 2004 by the Hellenic Ministry of Health in preparation for the Athens 2004 Olympic Games. Ever since, it serves as a major supervising and coordinating organ for the healthcare system.
The National Health Operations Center today

- A fully operational center with numerous capabilities at both national and international level that,
  - Functions in a national and European level
  - Promotes cooperation and coordinated action based on existing health policies
National Health Operations Center
National Health Operations Center
Divisions

Thessaloniki
Larisa
Patra
Athens
Heraklion
Basic structure of the Health Sector

Minister of Health

NaHOC

Health Districts(7)

Hellenic National Center for Emergency Care

Center for Disease Control & Prevention

Hospital
Fields of action of NaHOC

- Management of emergency medical services’ system
- Health crises due to major disasters
- Public Health
- CBRN threats
- Health crises due to climate changes
- Humanitarian approach to victims of natural or manmade disasters
- Health coverage of major events (athletic, social)
- European cooperation
- Education of health crisis managers
Operational plans

- **Philoktetes**
  (CBRN threats)
- **Perseas**
  (Hospital emergency situations)
- **Artemis**
  (Flu pandemic)
- **Sostratos**
  (Earthquakes)
General Secretariat of Civil Protection
National Operations Centers
NATO
WHO
E.U (EWRS, RAS-BICHAT)
ECDC-CDC
Health Protection Agency
INFOSAN
Interventions on the Health Sector

- Surveillance and coordination of the alternating emergency service system on Attiki and Thessaloniki
- Supervision of the National Center for Emergency Care (Hellenic EMS)
Interventions on the Health Sector

- Management of ICU and PICU beds
- Coverage of health needs in insular Greece
- Coordination of patient transfer from the periphery to tertiary hospitals
- Interventions on the private sector, if needed
Interventions on the Health Sector

- Prompt record keeping
- Documentation of events
- Analysis of data and actions aiming at self improvement and promotion of healthcare services
Major disasters

Coordination of Health sector operations in case of major disasters:
Earthquakes
Floods
Fires
Motor vehicle accidents
Airplane crashes
Pandemic Flu H1N1

- National Plan
- Antivirals Stockpile
- Vaccines Stockpile (8 million doses)
- Vaccination Plan
- Cooperation with other organizations
Forest fires in Greece
August 2009
National Health Operation Center
actions during the 2009 fires

- Crisis management
- Organization of medical care
- Protection of public health
- Financial support
- Psychosocial support
National Health Operation Center
actions during the 2009 fires

EVACUATION of,

- 1 General Hospital
- 1 Psychiatric Hospital
- 2 Child Care Organizations
- 3 Elder Care Organizations
All patients treated with respect and although the press wanted their names not a single name was published.

The role of the Greek church was essential.

After the restoration of the Hospitals and Organizations all patients returned back.
Helios plane crash
August 2005
Immediate implementation of crisis management plan
Coordination of 7 large hospitals, EMS and Hellenic CDC
Psychiatrists and psychologists directed to support the victims’ families
Transition of nursing staff to the area of the tragedy
Creation of media center in the area
Repatriation of the body remains
Bioterrorism

Handling of threats and mass destructions from

✓ Chemical
✓ Biological
✓ Radiological
✓ Nuclear factors
Healthcare management of illegal immigrants

Handling of massive entrance of illegal immigrants in cooperation with the Hellenic Center of Disease Control and Prevention

Operational Plans

«Balkanio»
«Poseidonio»
Training by NaHOC and HCDC of authorities at ports of entry in personal protection measures and safe handling of illegal immigrants

Documentation of incoming immigrants

Cooperation with HCDC in epidemiologic surveillance and contact tracing

Full pharmaceutical coverage of patients from entry to exit from the country
Humanitarian role
(examples)

- Gaza 01/2009
- Libya 12/2008
- Myanmar 5/2008
- Albania 3/2008
- Sri Lanka-Tsunami 12/2004
Humanitarian aid to Gaza
Humanitarian aid to Libya
Humanitarian Aid to Myanmar

- Mission consisting of group of experts
- Provision of medical support (antibiotics, fluids)
- Provision of tents for the homeless
Humanitarian aid to Sri-Lanka

- Operational plan “Argonaftis”
- Organization of floating hospital
- Medical and pharmaceutical coverage of the population
- Cooperation with Interpol in victim recognition
Health coverage of major athletic events

- Olympic Games “Athens 2004”
- NatWest Island Games XII 2007
- Champions League 2007
- 26th Classical Marathon of Athens 2008

In the near future...

- Special Olympics 2011
Agreement of cooperation between NaHOC-Hellenic Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity and Special Olympics Hellas organizing committee in September 2009 for the health coverage of the Special Olympics 2011 that will take place in Greece.
The European dimension of the National Health Operations Center
Examples of NaHOC cooperation with European Agencies

- Health Security Committee
  Protection of population health in events with potentially international impact

- WHO-Europe
  Implementation of International Health Regulations

- European Center for Disease Control and Prevention
  Epidemiological surveillance in cooperation with Hellenic CDC
Examples of NaHOC cooperation with European and other Agencies

- Participation of Greece in Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
  - monitoring of Public Health matters and exchange of knowledge and experience
- Participation of Greece in Black Sea Economical Cooperation-BSEC
- Several partnerships with EE and non-EU countries in matters of foreign citizens’ health and provision of humanitarian aid in case of disaster.
Participation in tabletop exercises

- Exercise Aeolus (European union)
- SEESIM 2008 (NATO and Southeastern European countries)
- Exercise United Horizon (European Union)
- Exercises New Watchman and Common Ground (European union)
- Several national exercises (health sector, law enforcement, internal affairs)
Educational activities

- Educational courses for Hospital Managers
- Educational courses for postgraduate students of crisis management courses
- Participation in exercises
- Participation in conferences and courses within the EU
Dealing with and handling health crises demands the cooperation of several authorities under central guidance.

The role of NaHOC is extremely valuable in managing crises in the health sector.

Additionally, NaHOC, is the place where, devoted persons, through experience and training, can grow to become excellent health crisis managers in the future.