

## **PP135 PREPARING AND MITIGATING A FIRE DRILL DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

After the world had been hit with Covid-19, the focus has been on handling the pandemic. The role of disaster training must include all types of disasters especially those that are prone to occur such as a fire. Increased alertness to other disasters would also help the hospital to prepare for hazards that may affect us amid a pandemic.

### **METHOD**

A fire drill was conducted in the emergency department of a single tertiary center hospital observing Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) as set by the Ministry of Health (MOH). The alertness, activation, evacuation pathways and disposition of patients and staff were observed. Referees consisting of all levels including support staff, doctors, specialist and invites from the fire unit, administration RADICARE services, security forces and PBSM were present to provide feedback.

### **RESULTS**

Recognition of fire in ED was fast because of awareness of fire as a hazard owing to yearly fire drills. Activation of fire alarm was smooth because they are placed in common areas throughout the emergency departments with good signage. MECC relays information of a fire to the hospital's

fire department and communicates regularly by announcements to facilitate the interloop communication. Well maintained fire extinguisher helps with fast action to put out fire to contain the damage and facilitate evacuation of patients. Isopod team activation ensures safe packaging of intubated patients for safety and prevention of covid spread during evacuation.

### **DISCUSSION**

Different evacuation routes for covid and non-covid patients are important to prevent cross contamination. Covid patients were evacuated to the covid tents in mass screening areas as the personnel working there are already in full PPE whereas the non-covid patients were evacuated to the common fire escape site far from the covid tents. This ensures covid precautions such as PPE and social distancing is preserved and reduces risk of transmission.

### **CONCLUSION**

Despite in a pandemic, other forms of disasters with its types and hazards cannot be ignored. Awareness of fire as a hazard must still be present and new evacuation pathways separating the covid and non-covid patients is important to prevent its spread during a fire without compromising the care of the patients