Hospital strategic preparedness planning: the new imperative.

Strategic preparedness planning is an important new imperative for many hospitals. Strategic preparedness planning goes beyond traditional product/market strategic planning by focusing on disaster prevention, containment, and response roles. Hospitals, because of their unique mission, size, complexity, the types of materials they handle, and the types of patients they encounter, are especially vulnerable to natural and human-initiated disasters. In addition, when disasters occur, hospitals must develop well-conceived first responder (receiver) strategies. This paper argues the case for strategic preparedness planning for hospitals and proposes a process for this relatively new and much needed type of planning.