

Frequently Asked Questions about Safe Hospitals

Aucune traduction disponible

These questions and answers were prepared by the Pan American Health Organization, regional office for the Americas of the World Health Organization, in the context of disaster mitigation and risk reduction programs and activities in and on behalf of hospitals and health facilities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

What is a safe hospital?

A safe hospital is an establishment whose services remain accessible and functional at maximum capacity and within the same infrastructure immediately following a natural disaster. The term 'safe hospital' encompasses all health facilities, regardless of their level of complexity. A hospital is 'safe' when it enjoys the highest level of protection possible, when access routes to the health facility are open and when the water supply and electric power and telecommunications can continue supplying the health facility, thus guaranteeing continuity of operations and the ability to absorb the additional demand for medical care.

What are the objectives of a 'safe hospitals' program?

- To develop national policies and regulations on making hospitals safe from disasters.
- To protect the lives of the occupants of a hospital or health facility.
- To protect the economic investment as well as the functionality of both new facilities and those identified as priorities within the health services network.
- To compile, organize and monitor the implementation of policies and national and international regulations on safe hospitals.

What strategies can be used to carry out a 'safe hospitals' program?

- Lobby with decision makers to incorporate a 'safe hospitals' program in ministries of health and other institutions that contribute to this goal, as well as in subregional integration organizations (SICA, the Central American Integration System; CAN, the Andean Community; and CARICOM, the Caribbean Community).
- Identify other sectors involved in safeguarding health facilities from disasters (drinking water, electric power, finance, disaster response committees, communications media, etc.) and involve them in joint technical and outreach activities.
- Develop scientific and academic programs and activities on safe hospitals in universities, research centers, professional associations related to the construction and operation of hospitals.
- Incorporate criteria for the protection of health facility into health investment projects so they serve as technical guidelines for incorporating risk mitigation in new health facilities. Include reference to these criteria the solicitation of bids on design, construction and operation of health facilities.

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Establish and implement independent mechanisms for control and supervision of projects, with the intervention of skilled professionals that work in coordination with the team executing the project.

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Mobilize the national and regional technical capacity in safe hospitals including

WHO
Collaborating
Centers and the Disaster Mitigation Advisory Group (DiMAG).

How can we reduce the vulnerability of health facilities?

The vulnerability of a health facility and the health services network in general can be reduced by carrying out a functional diagnosis, identifying priorities components, including aspects of vulnerability and risk reduction in national processes of accreditation, certification and licensing in the health facilities and ensuring the availability of essential resources for the hospital's response in disasters.

What else should be included in a 'safe hospitals' program?

Strengthening emergency preparedness and disaster relief through preparedness efforts and updating national, local and hospital plans for disasters.

Training the health workforce and those from other sectors in order to strengthen the response capacity of health facilities.

Ensuring the availability of essential resources for the hospital disaster response.

What kind of follow-up is needed?

Once the criteria, goals, and indicators are defined, 'safe' hospitals can serve as a model.

The designation of 'model' safe hospitals will provide an incentive for establishing a safe hospitals program and working to achieve its achievable goals.

The experiences and lessons learned from this process must be documented and shared at the global level.