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Public health emergency preparedness has been described as “the capability of the public health and health-care systems to prevent, quickly detect, respond to and contain public health threats around the world, and to maintain essential health services in the face of disasters” (WHO, 2007). This definition highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to preparedness that includes prevention, detection, response, and containment of public health threats. The importance of crisis and risk communication is widely recognised in the literature. Communication is crucial for informing the public, coordinating response efforts, and managing public anxiety. Effective communication strategies are essential for maintaining public trust and facilitating effective response actions.

Health systems are exposed to a variety of threats, including natural disasters, pandemics, and other complex emergencies. The ability of health systems to respond to these threats is influenced by multiple factors, including the capacity of health workers, the availability of resources, and the structure and regulations of the health system. A well-prepared health system is essential for mitigating the impact of disasters and protecting public health.

The health system may become overburdened or even collapse during a disaster, leading to a decrease in the provision of healthcare services and an increase in the burden of disease. This highlights the need for health systems to be resilient to the effects of disasters. Resilience requires being abreast of developments in disaster management, accessing the most useful tools, with a focus on the likely threats, and yet plan for an all-hazards approach to disasters. Their governments have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that their health systems can respond to the needs of populations in the face of disasters.

The health system, policy and institutional factors determine the capacity of populations to respond to disasters. Their governments have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that their health systems can respond to the needs of populations in the face of disasters. The health system, policy and institutional factors determine the capacity of populations to respond to disasters. Their governments have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that their health systems can respond to the needs of populations in the face of disasters.