

## Appendix D–19: Tips for Developing an Emergency Response Plan

Use these steps when developing an emergency response plan:

- Define the types of incidents to which the emergency response team responds. Establish internal emergency numbers or code words to alert the team and employees that urgent help is required.
- Determine the composition of the emergency response team and the number of members that are needed to provide 24-hour coverage. The response team can include front-line staff such as nursing or health care staff, supervisors or managers, staff social workers, security personnel and law enforcement officials.
- Define responsibilities for reporting violent incidents. Identify situations in which employees would need emergency services and ensure that staff know how to access the assistance of the emergency response team.
- Determine how to secure the site.
- Develop procedures for the team to follow in various situations.
- Identify the circumstances that would require a command centre and establish procedures for setting one up.
- Assign responsibilities for decision-making and action to those staff members who have skills and authority.
- Identify the person responsible for contacting external emergency services such as security, the police, victim support services and other outside assistance. Detail the circumstances in which external services should be called.
- Develop procedures to:
  - a) obtain immediate first aid or medical help
  - b) deal with emergency staff and police
  - c) complete reports
  - d) manage sensitive communications (for example, informing the victim’s family, other employees or the media)
- Develop an evacuation plan. Identify the conditions that would require an evacuation.
- Identify situations that would make it unsafe to evacuate the building and that would require a lock-down (a secure location where building occupants could take refuge). Identify the lock-down location and a lock-down plan.
- Identify and document procedures to ensure the safety of all staff.
- Design a form that the team can use to report each incident. The report should include: date; time; location; names of team responders; names of employees, clients and others who were present; witnesses; description of incident; team interventions; and debriefing of victims, witnesses and others.
- Train team members to respond to and defuse potentially violent situations, using non-violent crisis-intervention training and management of aggressive behaviour training, for example.
- Hold regular practice drills for the team and the organization.
- Evaluate the emergency response team
- Review the emergency response plan on an annual basis. Update the plan to keep it current and effective.
- Ensure the JHSC is consulted in the development of the Emergency Response Plan and training.

### Procedures for response to hostage-taking

If you are taken hostage:

- Remain calm. Listen closely to your captor’s instructions. Speak only when spoken to. Do not talk down to the captor or attempt to argue.
- Follow all instructions. Avoid making suggestions or comments.

- Remove any items that could identify you as a potential threat, for example, items identifying you as a member of the military, a police officer or a religious official.
- Avoid staring at your captor.
- Do not move or attempt to reach for anything unless you first ask permission.
- Observe as much as you can; your information may help the authorities.
- Stay clear of windows and doors as you may be in the line of fire. Drop to the floor if shots are fired.
- Do not attempt to stop or chase your captor if he or she leaves.

