

## Emergency Medicine 2018: International mass casualty responses: What we need to learn from each other - Tamara Green - George Washington University, USA

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**Statement of the Problem:** Mass casualty events have become more prevalent in recent decades. Specifically related to gun violence, mass casualty events are not as common as other categories of violence but given the number of lives affected and social media coverage, these events are becoming increasingly important. In America, citizens are 25 times more likely to die from gun violence than citizens of other high-income countries. While mass casualty events are not new phenomena, many American emergency departments may not be prepared for these mass casualty incidents outside of trauma and academic centers. Community departments, given their proximity to schools and neighborhoods, may be at increased risk for becoming the epicenters for triage and treatment. The purpose of this literature review is to examine international emergency responses to mass casualty events, looking for adaptable policies and recommendations that can improve public safety and improve outcomes in community emergency departments.

**Method:** An internet literature search was conducted using keywords international mass casualty, mass

casualty response, mass casualty shootings, international mass casualty incidents lessons learned. Abstracts to articles were reviewed for relevance and location of incidents.

**Results & Conclusion:** Mass casualty events around the world have similar effects on their local health care systems and resources. Staff and resources are over taxed with initial responses and post traumatic psychological effects. Researchers agree that first responder preparedness and practice drills are keys to optimizing outcomes. Planning for these events in communities and their emergency departments will improve patient outcomes and ensure that resources are available to care for responders when the initial trauma is over.

**Recommendations:** A summary of policies and recommendations from these articles will be presented to help community departments create their own plans that can easily be remembered and practiced for future events.