S-HELP

Securing Health.Emergency.Learning.Planning - Development of Decision Support Tools for Improving Preparedness and Response of Health Services Involved in Emergency Situations

Background

Large scale disasters – be they natural, deliberate or accidental – are inevitable. They do not respect borders, a large number of people will die and the long term consequences from economic to mental health can for years devastate the affected population. People, not tools, are the most important asset. Healthcare practitioners and services respond to emergency situations but they are sometimes overwhelmed often requiring rapid decision-making. Decisions in the allocation of strained resources, prioritising casualties, while simultaneously trying to contain the level of impact are challenging.

Between 70% and 80% of disaster losses are secondary to indirect deaths that would not have occurred without the breakdown of social and health services and the information systems. Therefore, preparedness and response capabilities of Health Services will directly impact society's ability to 'bounce back' to become more resilient to such devastating shocks.

Objectives

The central aim of the S-HELP project is to develop and deliver a holistic framed approach to healthcare preparedness, response and recovery. S-HELP is a people, process and technological solution to emergency situations. More precisely, it aims at:

- Defining an interoperability standard to enable communication and coordination across different geographical areas and cultural settings
- Facilitating a collaborative end user and supporting partner driven solution to meet the needs of different users from 4 countries in Europe and beyond.
- Defining and applying an interoperability standard for multiple agencies jointly responding to a disaster.
- Advancing the design and application of current available solutions, to improve preparedness, response and recovery in emergency situations.
- Delivering decision supporting tools for emergency preparedness, response and recovery, tested, evaluated and enhanced through quality, end user designed emergency scenarios.

Project Duration:
01/02/2014 – 31/01/2017

Project Budget:
3.5 million euro

Project Website:
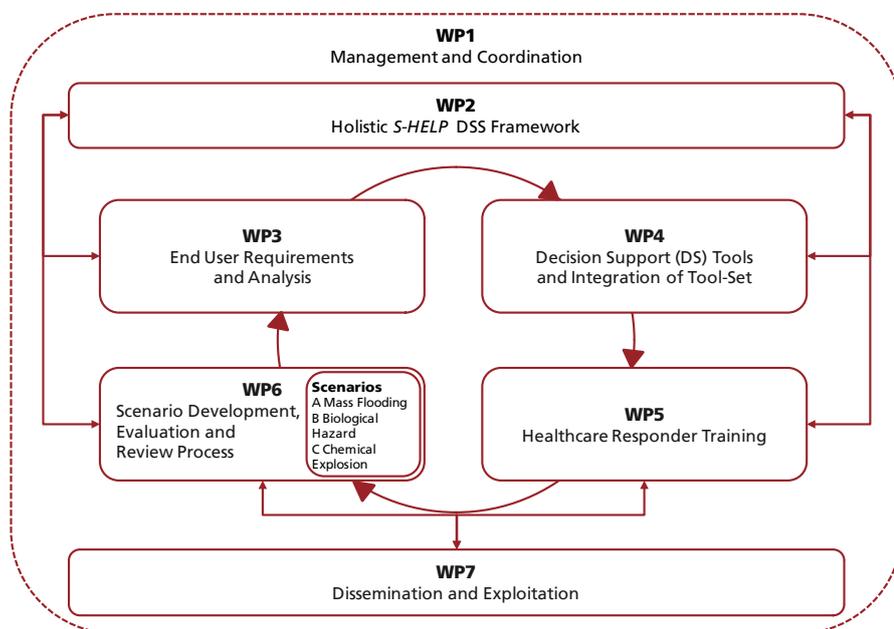www.fp7-shelp.eu

Activities

S-HELP will use a seven-stage methodological framework consisting of one project management work package (WP1) and six targeted work packages (WP2-7). Seamless inter-linkages with all work packages will guarantee the effective transfer, sharing and exchange of information during the whole project. This will ensure that the outputs of the various work packages are incorporated at appropriate stages throughout the lifetime of the project.

WP1
Management and Coordination

WP2
Holistic *S-HELP* DSS Framework

WP3
End User Requirements and Analysis

WP4
Decision Support (DS) Tools and Integration of Tool-Set

WP6
Scenario Development, Evaluation and Review Process

Scenarios
A Mass Flooding
B Biological Hazard
C Chemical Explosion

WP5
Healthcare Responder Training

WP7
Dissemination and Exploitation

Impact

The S-HELP Decision Support System (DSS) brings major benefits to emergency health-care management, from learning and preparing for emergency incidents and analysing threats, to post evaluation, reporting and logistics management. It provides a unique mechanism to assist stakeholders and end users to work together for co-ordinated, effective, evidence based decisions at all stages of emergency management (EM). It therefore plays an essential role in the response to emergency situations that in many cases have negative impact on human's health.

The tools delivered (and having been validated in 3 key scenarios) by S-HELP will result in improved preparedness and response of health services involved in large scale and/or cross border emergency situations, a more effective knowledge base for responder and decision-makers, thereby supporting the EU regulation CEN BT/WG 161 ,Protection and Security of the Citizen'.

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