

NURS FPX 4060 Assessment 2

Community Resources

Public health systems and community resources are critical in promoting public health and safety in response to calamities and disasters. The intricate mechanism of response and collaboration between various stakeholders for public health improves the equity of care in the communities. They provide services like disaster risk reduction and preparedness, community health promotion, emergency healthcare, and first aid, especially to displaced and vulnerable populations. These resources also promote a proactive and empowered approach toward healthcare and safety through education, community engagement, and accountability. (Choudhary, 2021). In this assessment one of these resource systems, The American Red Cross will be discussed regarding the mission and vision of the organization, efforts to promote equal opportunities for healthcare resources, impact of funding and policies, and overall effect on public health and safety.

Mission and Vision of the Organization

Organizations such as the Red Cross America are auxiliary to public authorities to provide consistent humanitarian care. They employ a team of community-based volunteers and staff that provide services for emergency preparedness and disaster management, first aid delivery and training, maintaining 40% of national blood supply resources, and supporting military communities (American Red Cross, 2023d). It operates on the fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality (American Red Cross, 2023b). The mission statement is to alleviate human suffering, protect life and health, and uphold human dignity, especially during armed conflicts and other emergencies (Purdy, 2019). The vision statement explains that The American Red Cross uses a strong network of volunteers, donors, and partners to turn compassion into action so that all the people affected by disasters across the country receive care and shelter. The ARC ensures that everyone has access to life-saving blood products, communities are prepared for a disaster, and armed service members and their families are supported (Hassan, 2019).

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The American Red Cross establishes and supports initiatives nationwide and globally to continue the agenda of public healthcare and safety without discrimination. The American Red Cross works with community partners to form a diverse program of blood donors which is critical to ensure life-saving blood products are available to 1 in every 7 hospital patients across America who need a transfusion (American Red Cross, 2023e). The American Red Cross (ARC)

also launched the “until help arrives initiative” which provides online training courses to tackle opioid overdoses, severe bleeding, cardiac arrest, and choking emergencies, and “Smart Sports Coalition” to reduce tragedies among student-athletes by providing Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) courses and Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs). The TRC volunteers delivered emergency messages for more than 87,000 deployed service members to connect them to their families and raise morale (Ohio, 2023). Furthermore, The Red Cross provides food, shelter, and medical supplies to displaced and disaster-stricken communities and warzones around the world such as Africa, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Ukraine, Gaza, and Syria.

Promoting Equal Opportunity

The American Red Cross promotes the principles of humanity, impartiality, and neutrality that sum up to establishing support and care for all human life and alleviating suffering wherever it is found. It serves human beings regardless of background, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class. It provides refuge and asylum to migrants of all backgrounds during domestic disasters by providing basic provisions, reuniting families, and supporting other non-government or government agencies. The blood donation services operated by the ARC give life to all patients in critical need of blood products. The ARC provides life-saving training and education to support community health (American Red Cross, 2023f). these operating principles and services empower the community and lay the foundation for selfless, universal, and uninterrupted humanitarian action.

Social and Cultural Barriers

The humanitarian efforts of the ARC can be hindered by sociocultural barriers in the population receiving services. One of these barriers may be language which makes access and utilization of resources provided by the ARC difficult for ethnic and non-English speaking communities (Garza, 2023). Similarly, insensitivity towards religion and cultural beliefs and practices can lead to mistrust, refusal of aid, emotional toll on top of physical calamities, and violation of public health and safety orders that endanger whole communities in ARC disaster response programs (Aspen, 2020). According to Yu and Writer (2021), the “Diversity Calls” initiative by Red Cross volunteers from Texas aims to break down the language barriers of ethnic communities. It includes a language training course for volunteers to learn to speak and understand basic phrases of Farsi, Vietnamese, Spanish, Hindi German, and French to help non-English speaking communities. Cultural humility, awareness, and sensitivity are essential in the process of addressing a humanitarian need (Rahmani et al., 2022). Breaking down these barriers is vital to improving access to universal care.

Economic and Physical Barriers

Many Factors such as weather conditions, infrastructure, availability of services, and geographical location of the target area are some of the most important physical barriers to equitable access to humanitarian care. Health groups such as youth living in conflicted regions, migrants, and ethnic minorities face physical barriers such as mobility restriction, lack of registration with healthcare systems, and transport hurdles which undermine the promise of universal humanitarian relief (Tonnessen & Houge, 2021). Economic factors such as lack of funding and economic sanctions are also major barriers to providing humanitarian aid. These factors cause resource scarcity, inefficient flow of funds, and systemic hurdles in the provision of support and care to people in need. The ARC commissioned a global report to conceptualize “Health in the Last Mile” which identifies the last mile health groups and provides the framework to increase the number of healthcare providers, establish healthcare setups closer to target populations, and ensure that Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is a priority in times of crisis (Tonnessen & Houge, 2021). Understanding the political economy, encouraging funding and resources, and coordinating with other non-profit and government agencies can make overcoming these barriers a manageable task (Smith, 2021). This management is necessary to provide help and care to anyone in distress no matter the circumstances.

Impact of Funding and Resources

The American Red Cross exists as an independent entity that exists as a non-profit, tax-exempt, and charitable institute to pursue a charter granted by the United States Congress. It has a legal state of federal instrumentality and has three responsibilities towards the federal government that are to fulfill the provisions of the Geneva Convention, provide communication support to the United States Military, and maintain a domestic and international disaster response under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (Hassan, 2019). The American Red Cross does not receive regulatory support from the federal government. Rather it relies upon voluntary community contributions and returning service charges of operations such as blood banks and health safety training courses generating about 3.2 billion dollars in revenue in 2022. (Lee, 2023). The Organization’s ability to achieve its humanitarian charter is influenced by federal policies and the donation of funds. Shortage of funding resources, costs of inflation, and the burden of one disaster after another hinder the ARC’s humanitarian action due to the lack of resources, and running cost of facilities across the nation. (ICRC, 2023). Being a non-profit organization, these funds are also subject to policies and sanctions such as United Nations (UN) financial sanctions for counterterrorism. These policies affect the humanitarian actions of NPOs such as the ARC by the lack of adequate legal protection for carrying out humanitarian action in high-risk jurisdictions and financial access difficulties due to fear of regulatory scrutiny (Eckert, 2022). The ARC also works with legislators and administrators at all levels of government in the wake of public health advocacy and is influenced by federal policy changes (Purdy, 2019). It is vital to consider the impact of a lack of resources and restricting policies on the provision of support to people in need and better steps should be taken to bridge these gaps.

Impact on Health and Safety Needs

The American Red Cross is a global non-profit humanitarian resource that excels in providing disaster relief, community empowerment, blood donation services, and ensuring equitable, universal access to healthcare and safety resources for everyone (Hassan, 2019). It is an important driver of care and support to humans in any calamity.

Role of Nurses

Nurses are an integral part of the American Red Cross. For years they were the public face of the organization. Clara Barton and Jane Dulano, the cofounders of an early form of the organization were nurse leaders providing aid to soldiers in combat. As stated by Red Cross Central California (2020), today nurses continue their tradition of helping the suffering in many ways but their work is recognized in three main places:

- Disaster cycle services: The nurses are deployed to conflicted and disaster-stricken regions and provide initial medical services and first aid.
- Teaching: Instructing and educating the public in first aid and CPR courses is one of the essential roles of nurses in empowering communities to be disaster-ready and proactive about their health.
- Blood donation services: Nurses have a pivotal role in the safe collection and administration of blood products.

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The Future of Nursing Report 2020-2030 supports the initiatives of nursing care in The American Red Cross (National Academy of Medicine, 2019). Recommendations 3, 7, and 8, of the report suggest valuing public health nurses, fostering their roles as leaders, preparing them for disaster management, and supporting their well-being for an equitable future in healthcare.

Conclusion

The American Red Cross is a global non-profit humanitarian organization. It employs a network of volunteers and donation-based funds towards universal, non-discriminatory, and equitable provision of services. These services include food, shelter, medical resources, blood products, armed forces support, and many more services towards the betterment of society and alleviating human suffering. It mitigates many sociocultural and physical barriers to UHC and provides a global disaster response. It also includes communities in their health and safety by providing education and first aid training. Nurses play a key role in all the main services provided by ARC by assuming their roles as educators, first responders, and care providers. A better

regulatory funding plan and improving the number of healthcare volunteers can propagate the humanitarian agenda of the Red Cross in America and all over the world.

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