



EUROPEAN POLICYBRIEF

NO-FEAR



TITLE

Improving Security in Ambulance and Pre-Hospital Services: A Policy Brief on Addressing Violence and Security Risks

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INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding Ambulance Providers: A Global Imperative

Violence against ambulance providers is a distressing global trend that knows no boundaries, affecting both conflict zones and peaceful countries. Every day, these dedicated healthcare personnel face the risk of verbal threats, physical assaults, and even fatal attacks while carrying out their life-saving duties. Such violence hampers the delivery of essential emergency care, leaving citizens, including vulnerable children, without vital assistance.

Recognizing the inherent contradiction between saving lives and ensuring personal safety, it is crucial to prioritize the preparation of ambulance teams for threatening situations. Our project has developed a practical training manual tailored to ambulance providers worldwide. By focusing on individual protective behaviour, the manual empowers responders to reduce the incidence of violence and threats. It encourages contributions from providers based on their experiences and knowledge.

The goals of this training manual are twofold: to equip ambulance providers with practical skills to enhance their security and mitigate violence's impact, and to serve as a starting point for organizations seeking to strengthen their preparedness and security management. We urge immediate action to address violence against ambulance providers, as it is unequivocally unacceptable. Together, let us protect those who serve and ensure that violence has no place in emergency healthcare.

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

The development of the Training Manual for Ambulance and Pre-Hospital Response in Risk Situations is informed by several key policy-relevant findings. These findings are based on the operational experiences

and analyses highlighted in the report "[BEST PRACTICE for Ambulance Services in Risk Situations](#)" and draw on the [Safer Access Framework](#) and the [Training Manual on Interpersonal Violence Prevention and Stress Management in Health Care Facilities](#). The following findings underscore the importance of addressing violence and threats against ambulance providers:

1. **Global Scope of Violence:** The manual recognizes that violence affects ambulance providers worldwide, including physical assaults, verbal abuse, denial of access, and threats. This highlights the urgent need for policies and measures to protect ambulance providers operating in high-risk environments, regardless of the presence of armed conflict.
2. **Preparedness for Risk Mitigation:** The manual emphasizes the importance of preparedness in addressing threats and violence faced by ambulance providers. By providing guidance on risk awareness and prevention, the manual equips providers with the necessary tools to mitigate security incidents before, during, and after the delivery of health services.
3. **Role of Ambulance Providers:** The training manual acknowledges the active role ambulance providers can play in preventing and reducing security incidents. It encourages providers to reflect on their experiences and contribute to the development of context-specific recommendations to enhance service delivery safety.
4. **Contextualization and Ownership:** The manual adopts a participatory approach, facilitating reflection, discussions, and group work among participants. This ensures contextualization and ownership of the recommendations developed, empowering ambulance providers to tailor strategies to their specific operational contexts.
5. **Complementary Approach:** The manual complements existing approaches and tools such as the Ambulance and Pre-Hospital Services in Risk Situations, Best Practice for Ambulance Services in Risk Situations, Training Manual on Interpersonal Violence Prevention and Stress Management in Health Facilities, and the Safer Access Framework. By building on established resources, the manual strengthens the comprehensive response to violence against ambulance providers.

The policy-relevant findings emphasize the need for a collaborative and multifaceted approach to address violence and threats against ambulance providers. By incorporating risk mitigation strategies, promoting provider engagement, and aligning with existing frameworks, policies can be developed and implemented to enhance the safety and security of ambulance providers globally.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Training Manual for Ambulance and Pre-Hospital Response in Risk Situations, TARRS, is in the pilot phase. Based on the experiences that are the basis for the development of the TARRS, the following policy implications and recommendations are highlighted for policymakers:

1. **Policy Framework and Legislation:**
 - Develop and enforce comprehensive policies and legislation that explicitly address violence and threats against ambulance providers.
 - Ensure alignment of national laws with international frameworks, such as the Geneva Conventions and relevant human rights instruments, to provide legal protection for ambulance providers.
2. **Risk Assessment and Preparedness:**
 - Implement robust risk assessment methodologies to identify potential risks and vulnerabilities faced by ambulance providers.
 - Develop comprehensive preparedness plans and standard operating procedures that address threats and violence, ensuring that ambulance providers are equipped to handle high-risk situations.
3. **Training and Education:**

- Establish mandatory training programs for ambulance providers on risk mitigation, conflict resolution, and de-escalation techniques.
 - Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, such as health and security agencies, to develop specialized training curricula that address the unique challenges faced by ambulance providers in different contexts.
4. Reporting and Accountability:
 - Establish reporting mechanisms that enable ambulance providers to document incidents of violence and threats.
 - Implement systems for tracking and analysing data on incidents, enabling policymakers to identify trends, assess risk levels, and formulate targeted interventions.
 - Ensure accountability for acts of violence against ambulance providers through appropriate legal mechanisms and disciplinary measures.
 5. Resource Allocation and Support:
 - Allocate sufficient financial and logistical resources to ensure the safety and security of ambulance providers.
 - Provide adequate staffing levels, personal protective equipment, and communication systems to enhance the capacity of ambulance providers to respond effectively in high-risk situations.
 - Provide psychological support services and counselling programs to mitigate both the short-term and long-term impact of violence on ambulance providers' well-being.
 6. International Cooperation and Knowledge Sharing:
 - Foster international cooperation and knowledge exchange among countries and organizations to share best practices, lessons learned, and innovative strategies for addressing violence against ambulance providers.
 - Collaborate with international humanitarian and health organizations to develop standardized guidelines and protocols for the protection of ambulance providers in different operational contexts.

These policy implications and recommendations serve as actionable steps for policymakers to enhance the safety, security, and well-being of ambulance providers worldwide. By implementing these measures, governments can create an enabling environment that prioritizes the protection of those who dedicate their lives to saving others.

SUSTAINABILITY AND LEGACY

Promote the **Training Manual for Ambulance and Pre-Hospital Response in Risk Situations, TARRS** as a valuable toolkit to increase safety and security in ambulance and prehospital care. TARRS provides practical guidelines and recommendations to reduce the risks faced by ambulance providers, ensuring their well-being and the continuity of emergency care. Access the TARRS manual at: https://www.rodekors.no/globalassets/_rapporter/health-care-in-danger-hcid-rapporter/tarrs_pilot-spreads.pdf

The TARRS Training Manual addresses the global problem of violence and threatening behaviour against healthcare professionals. It recognizes that such incidents do not only occur in conflict zones, but also in peaceful countries, and pose a significant challenge for ambulance providers and healthcare personnel on a daily basis and not least in security-critical incidents. The aim of the handbook is to increase the resilience of healthcare workers by providing a holistic approach to risk reduction and preparedness. It emphasizes the importance of risk awareness, prevention and individual protective behaviour. Through workshops and shared experiences, ambulance providers gain practical skills and recommendations to deliver services more safely. The handbook serves as a valuable resource for organizations wishing to improve safety

management and preparedness in ambulance and pre-hospital services. By prioritizing health personnel's safety, trust and acceptance can be promoted in local communities, which ensures a safe and protective response in emergency situations.

RESEARCH PARAMETERS

The Training Manual for Ambulance and Pre-Hospital Response in Risk Situations (TARRS) aims to address the escalating trend of violence and threatening behaviour towards ambulance providers worldwide. The primary objective of the project is to equip ambulance providers with the necessary skills and knowledge to enhance their security and mitigate the impact of violence during their operations.

The project methodology involves a comprehensive approach to the development of the training manual. It draws on experiences from various sources, including discussion groups where challenges were looked at, best practices were shared and how to improve the security of the services.

The training manual is also based on online exercises and workshops with operational staff to map types of violence that occur in various contexts. Case studies were developed to identify gaps in the response to emergency medical services (EMS) violence. These findings informed the content and structure of the manual, ensuring its relevance and applicability.

The TARRS manual also leverages existing approaches and tools such as the Ambulance and Pre-Hospital Services in Risk Situations, Best Practice for Ambulance Services in Risk Situations, Training Manual on Interpersonal Violence Prevention and Stress Management in Health Facilities, and the Safer Access Framework. These resources provide valuable insights and guidance in addressing violence and security issues in ambulance services.

The project methodology emphasizes a participatory approach, involving the active engagement of ambulance providers. Participants are guided through reflection points, discussions, and group work to develop context-specific recommendations and practical strategies for delivering services more safely.

Overall, the objectives and methodology of the TARRS reflect a comprehensive and collaborative effort to address the security concerns of ambulance providers and enhance their preparedness and response capabilities.

PROJECT IDENTITY

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