

Perceptions of Emergency Management in Members of Reciprocal Organizations

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Background

Foundational Skill

A reciprocal agreement exists between the CATA and the BOC that allows members eligibility to certify in both countries.¹

An area of emphasis for both countries is emergency management (EM) as this content area is the only one that requires mandatory continuing education (CE).^{2,3}

This mandatory CE requirement illustrates that both organizations likely view EM as a foundational skill.



Background

Skill and Knowledge Decay

The has CATA updated their mandatory CE requirements citing skill decay as the reason for this change.⁴

Skill and knowledge decay is a natural phenomena that occurs overtime due to non-use.⁵

These timelines vary, however literature supports that EM skills and knowledge often decay faster than certification renewal timeframes.⁶⁻¹⁰

Background

Maintenance

The goal of mandatory CE is to limit decay and maintain skills and knowledge, personal practice and review are also tools that can be used to combat decay.^{6,7}

Without a concrete definition of EM it is challenging to identify and combat the complete skill and knowledge set.

What are current perspectives on maintenance and review of EM?

- Do members of reciprocal organizations consider CE guidelines enough to combat decay?
- How are members maintaining their skills and knowledge?
- Could higher level or additional certifications, that require more review, also combat decay?
- How do we define EM?

Purpose:

To study athletic trainers and therapists (ATTs) perceptions regarding:

- The definition of EM
- If ATTs consider EM a foundational skill?
- ATTs plan to maintain skills and knowledge
- The need for higher-level certifications in EM

Methods

- Purposeful sampling was used
- 10 participants with content expertise in EM
 - 5 each: clinical and academic athletic trainers/therapists
- PI conducted semi-structured interviews via Zoom
 - Recorded, transcribed and checked for accuracy
- Consensual qualitative analysis used
 - Individual identification of themes
 - Third member checking for accuracy
- Repeated for subthemes and quotes.
- Data saturation was achieved
- Frequencies of the top three EM skills or techniques were tabulated based on responses

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

1) What is your definition of emergency management?

a) What is your definition based upon?

2) Do you feel emergency management is an essential component/foundational skill set of athletic training/therapy, and why or why not?

3) In your own words, explain the process with regards to emergency management skills required to obtain and maintain certification?

4) Tell me what you know about the opposite country's requirements for emergency management at initial certification and beyond.

5) What in your educational background and prior continuing education courses help you to maintain or improve your emergency management skills?

a) Have any of these been required by your association?

b) Have any of these been required by your employer?

c) Is there any course that you have always wanted to take and why?

6) What are the top three emergency management skills/techniques that you feel every athletic trainer/therapist should be fluent in and why?

a) In your understanding of the changing education requirements, do you feel that there are skills that you may lack that are now being taught in accredited programs and what is your plan to stay current with the ever-changing skill set?

7) In a perfect world, what emergency management certification(s) would you want all athletic trainers/therapists to have and why?

a) What do feel are the main obstacles to this and why?

8) Do you feel a higher-level certification beyond BLS is needed, given the diverse arenas that athletic trainers/therapists now find themselves working in with vastly different skill application, and why?

a) What do feel are the main obstacles to this and why?

9) Are you aware of the Emergency Medical Responder in the US/First Responder Certification in Canada, what it involves, and how similar it is to our current scope of practice?

a. Do you now feel that this certification would be more appropriate for athletic trainers/therapists to hold that BLS?

Participant Demographics

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Years of Experience	Current Setting	Type of Certification	Route to certification
Amy	50	Female	Caucasian	25	Clinical	CATA	Undergrad
Betsy	32	Female	Caucasian	10	Academic	BOC	Undergrad
Carol	51	Female	Caucasian	22	Academic	CATA	Undergrad/internship
Dennis	31	Male	Caucasian	2	Clinical	BOC	Graduate
Elaine	45	Female	Caucasian	22	Academic	BOC	Undergrad
Lesley	52	Female	Caucasian	26	Academic	CATA	Undergrad
Landon	57	Male	Caucasian	35	Clinical	BOC	Undergrad
Richard	41	Male	Chinese	19	Clinical	CATA	Undergrad/internship
Dean	52	Male	Black	30	Clinical	BOC	Undergrad
Ashley	46	Female	Caucasian	CATA 23 NATA 18	Clinical	Dual	Undergrad/internship

Results

Top 3 Skills and Techniques in EM

Skill	Frequency
Cardiac management/CPR-AED for cardiac arrest	8
Airway management/airways	5
Deadly bleeding/major bleeding/circulation	4
Spinal restriction/spine boarding/spinals	3
Vitals	2
Heat illness	2
Responder safety	1
Recognition and observation skill	1
Equipment removal	1
Teamwork and communication	1
Use of diagnostic tools	1
Splinting management	1

Discussed in conjunction with personal definitions of EM.

No skills were listed in participant's definitions.

Instead, broad concepts were emphasized.

All participant's agreed EM was both an essential and foundational skill of ATT.

Results

Consensus Definition of Emergency Management

A response to any situation imposing harm to a patient to the best of one's ability utilizing the most up to date practice guidelines.

Whereby the response includes:

- 1) Planning for and managing the scene of any emergent event
- 2) Recognition, assessment, and treatment of the patient
- 3) Care of oneself both physically and mentally during and after the event

Results

Additional Themes

EM as a Foundational Skill

Absolutely, emphatically, yes, because these incidents, accidents, conditions, injuries it [sic], they can happen absolutely anywhere, and the notion of this stuff only happens on the field of play. We're kidding ourselves.

– Lesley, CATA

The new [CAATE] standards do outline things really well, and I think do really help lead to putting us, in establishing us as an expert.

- Betsy, BOC

Results

Additional Themes

Gain and Maintain EM Knowledge and Skills

From a maintain standpoint, it's not that great. I mean, you have to have Emergency Cardiac Care or CPR every 2 years. But if you look at this, the instruction of CPR in this country, a lot of it is just a handshake and a wink.

– Dean, BOC

I cannot repeat enough times. The value of just getting in there. Yeah, getting your hands dirty. Getting reps in. There is no better way to remember a manual skill than to actually practice the scenario with your bare hands.

- Richard, CATA

Results

Additional Themes

Additional Certifications

So absolutely the the [sic] First Responder. Because there is more to it than just doing CPR, right? Like, when you have CPR it's great, but it's still not enough right. I mean not everything falls under the the [sic] treatment category for BLS, right?

– Carol, CATA

I don't think you should have anything besides your CPR. Why do we need another certification or training to do our own jobs? You are a certified athletic trainer. You're a health care provider. You have these skills, these management [skills], and you should maintain those things.

- Elaine, BOC

Conclusions

All participants agreed

- EM is considered a foundation of ATT.
- Personal practice was the biggest method of gaining and maintaining proficiencies in EM
 - Most did not engage in additional CE outside of mandatory CE and/or maintaining any other certifications
- No consensus was reached regarding additional certifications.

Application to Education and Practice

Ensure students, and clinicians alike, are aware of the following:

- The differing mandatory requirements to obtain and maintain ATTs certifications worldwide
- Knowledge and skill will decay, this is a natural process
- The importance of personal review and varied CE, at appropriate time intervals, as methods to combat decay
- Hands-on practice and review are only as good as the level of knowledge and skill of the clinician with the most amount of knowledge and the least amount of decay
- Limitations exist within the current CE offerings and students and clinicians should ensure their CE choices are varied and at appropriate intervals

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Thank you, questions?

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