

Grassroots Preparedness, a Radiation Risk Scale, and Marketing of Health Physics

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This presentation has three distinct segments. The first segment discusses the significant impact that radiation professionals (health and medical physicists, nuclear medicine professionals, radiologic technologists, nuclear engineers, and others) can make toward better preparing their local communities for response to a radiation emergency. An available funding opportunity to facilitate recruitment and training of local radiation professionals into existing local volunteer registries is described. In the second segment, a Radiation Risk Scale is proposed as a simple tool for communicating radiation risk to the public, leaders, and decision makers. This scaling system offers several distinct advantages: a) It is simple; 2) It conveys meaning and provides a frame of reference immediately; c) It does not require any understanding or use of radiation units or any mention of radiation dose rates or radioactivity levels; d) It is not affected by differences in specific national or international radiation dose limits, concentration limits, or other regulatory standards; and e) it can be used during an emergency situation or in its aftermath to promote responsible action by the public. The third and final segment of the presentation addresses the need to market the profession of health physics and the organization that represents it. An idea is presented and audience opinion and feedback is solicited using an anonymous multiple choice form.