

Mental Health and Human Resilience

A qualitative study on the resilience of public health nurses who supported sufferers of the Great East Japan earthquake over the last six years

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Background: Seven years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake and subsequent Fukushima Nuclear Disaster occurred in Fukushima in 2011. Residents are still faced many difficulties. The role of public health nurses that supports those victims continuously is large in the community. However, how to support themselves as public health nurses is an urgent task, but it is in a fumbling state. The purpose of this study was to clarify the resilience of public health nurses who supported evacuee residents from the disaster aftermath for six years and to examine a support approach that is tailored to the feelings of the public health nurses.

Methods: The content of the interview was divided into two aspects: the difficulty and support for public health nursing activities after the disaster. They were analyzed qualitatively.

Results: Public health nurses assisted evacuees in the shortage of supplies and information immediately after the disaster, and became overworked. In addition, a new health problem due to prolonged evacuation life, human relations with residents who turn to hostile hostility, situations where self-care can't be done despite being victims by job priority was under pressure. However, supplementary support by the medical team, mutual cooperation with residents, emotional support by close friends, pride as a public health nurse were supposed to be supported.

Conclusions: Due to the disaster, the sense of responsibility to be a public health nurse is the driving force of the activity. On the other hand, they become heavy pressure, causing physical and mental exhaustion. It was suggested that a support system is needed to consult the public health nurse herself so that mental health can be maintained.