



McGill

Department of Family Medicine | Département de médecine de famille



A Canadian Response to Humanitarian Training

April 23rd, 2014, Montreal; Canada is a critical contributor to disaster and humanitarian response around the world. Expertise from across Canada, the US and UK have joined to develop the 2014 Canadian Disaster and Humanitarian Response Training Program, **led by Dr. Kirsten Johnson, Assistant Professor, Department of Family Medicine, Director, Humanitarian Studies Initiative, McGill**, who has also been pivotal in the development of Harvard University's humanitarian training program. The program attracts global interest with participants hailing from the Philippines to Haiti, Cameroon to Colombia.

Dr. Johnson explains "this exciting and dynamic training program is created in response to the need for a standardized approach to training for humanitarian and disaster response and at the same time uniting Canadian expertise in the global humanitarian sector. Participants will gain a solid foundation to enhance or build a career in international humanitarian research or practice while giving each an opportunity to become part of the humanitarian sector community."

The in-class program takes place at McGill University's New Residents, May 5 through 15 followed by a three-day Simulation Exercise, May 16 through May 18 at Farnham Military Training Camp, Farnham, Eastern Townships.

The Simulation Exercise includes enacted complex humanitarian emergencies that involves understanding cultural context, war, natural disaster and forced migration of the local population in addition to other challenges which might be experienced as humanitarian responders might experience. This exercise creates a physically and emotionally demanding environment with participants suffering from lack of sleep, food and the normal comforts they are used to.

This course provides participants with the essential skills all humanitarians should possess before working in a disaster situation, for the benefit of the field workers themselves and the recipients of the aid.

For further information please contact Dr Kirsten Johnson: Kirsten@humanitariantraininginitiative.org or +1 514.585.8733.

For Immediate Release

The 2014 Canadian Disaster and Humanitarian Response Training Program is organized and delivered by leadership the following organizations:

Centre for Excellence in Emergency Preparedness (CEEP)
Canadian Red Cross
Care Canada
Action Against Hunger Canada
Médecins Sans Frontiers / Doctors Without Borders Canada
Romeo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative (Dalhousie University)
Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Response Group
Humanitarian Healthcare Ethics Institute
Humanitarian Training Initiative
Humber College – International Development Institute
Humanitarian Academy, Harvard University
Department of Family Medicine, McGill University
Department of Family Medicine, McMaster University
Feinstein International Centre, Tufts University
Dalhousie University
University of Ottawa
Université du Québec à Montréal
Université de Montréal
University of Toronto
University of Victoria
The Policy Action Group on Emergency Response (PAGER)

The Policy Action Group on Emergency Response is an informal, flexible and responsive forum of operational Canadian humanitarian agencies whose mandate involves responding to humanitarian emergencies worldwide. Its membership includes representatives from non-governmental organizations, CIDA's International Humanitarian Assistance Division, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.