

## Editorial

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### Health Aspects of the Tsunami Disaster in Asia – The Phuket Papers

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JEPHC has previously published an [editorial](#) on the World Health Organization (WHO) Conference on the Health Aspects of the Tsunami Disaster in Asia. This editorial followed two previous editorials on the Tsunami disaster in Asia, one on [Evidence Aid](#), the Cochrane Collaboration's response, and the second, a [local perspective](#) from an author in one of the countries affected by the Tsunami.

Subsequently, the full suite of Conference Papers from the WHO Conference were published as a [special issue of Prehospital and Disaster Medicine](#) (PDM), the international, MEDLINE listed, peer-reviewed, journal of the World Association of Disaster & Emergency Medicine (WADEM) which can now be accessed for free (online).

These "Phuket Papers" include: overview presentations on the Tsunami disaster; reports from each of the discussion groups held throughout the Conference; reports from the four synthesising rapporteurs; the summary by Dr David Nabarro (Director of HAC/WHO); and, response from the WHO 58<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly which received these collective reports from the Phuket Conference.

This unique publication was made possible by mutual agreement between the Conference organisers, WHO, and the Editor-in-Chief of Prehospital and Disaster Medicine. As noted by Professor Marvin L Birnbaum MD, PhD, in his Editor's Corner, "the principle message from the Phuket conference is, 'Why have we not learnt from what we have learned?'"

The thoughtful structure of the WHO Conference and the magnificent efforts by the Conference organisers have been rewarded with a rich tapestry of analytic reports from each session covering virtually all aspects of this overwhelming disaster. The foresight of the collaboration which has resulted in this publication, together with the expertise of the PDM editorial team, have created a rare and valuable legacy, which should be compulsory reading for all researchers, clinicians, administrators, educators, and practitioners who wish to advance their understanding of this major event. These "Phuket Papers" also provide a landmark case study to further advance the science and evidence base for disaster health interventions, and provide valuable input into improving the professionalisation of the humanitarian workforce.

A subsequent edition of PDM included a further supplement on “Special Reports Regarding the Health Aspects of the 2004 Earthquake and Tsunami”, which includes six further international papers reporting on specific aspects of this disaster which complement and provide further case study insight into this event.

The international emergency health community thank the WHO and PDM for their foresight, fruitful collaboration and generosity in compiling this significant collection and for making it freely available.