

## **Letter to the Editor**

### **Terrorism and Health: The Responsibility of Intellectuals?**

Madam, this is regarding the article by Dr Haider Naqvi which was published in the May 2010 edition of JPMA.

The authors have done a commendable job in discussing the recent epidemic of terrorist attacks which have inflicted our society and have highlighted the many concerns in dealing with them.

However, I would like to propose a correction of facts. The authors state that Pakistan does not have an organized EMS and therefore there are delays in transporting victims of suicide blasts and attacks to health facilities. I would like to point out that in certain parts of the country, namely the urban areas of Punjab, a governmental EMS has been operational since 2006. Since 2007, Rescue 1122, Punjab Emergency Service has participated in around 45 Mass Casualty Incidents due to terrorism, the record of which is available. On all of these occasions, a proper

Incident Command was established and patients were transported after triaging and stabilization. Apart from pre-hospital care, Rescue 1122 has participated in search and rescue and fire-fighting on these sites too. On almost all of these incidents the response time of Rescue 1122 was 4-5 minutes. On certain occasions they have also provided pre-hospital support to MCI's in the capital city. The major cities have a dedicated Disaster Response Time which has been trained to deal in MCI's. Besides this incident management and disaster response is a part of the curriculum of Emergency Services Academy, Lahore. Still lots more needs to be done in terms of disaster preparedness, inter-agency collaboration and disaster research, but steps are being taken in the right direction.

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