INTRODUCTION

Africa, as in the rest of the world, is subject to various types of disaster, both natural and man-made, that impact on animal health (1). Oil spills along the coastline from tankers, bush fires in game reserves such as Pilanesberg, floods, as occurred this year in Mozambique, all have devastating effects on animals. These can also influence human health, as for instance, the carcasses found after floods, contaminate humans' water supplies.

Zoonoses, where animal diseases are passed on to humans, such as Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever, Ebola, Anthrax and Avian flu also have to be monitored and preventative steps taken to avert outbreaks in the human population.

Various disciplines are involved in ensuring the health of people, animals and the environment. These include epidemiology, public health and veterinary public health, virology, parasitology, zoonoses and ecology. The veterinarian plays a pivotal role when disasters strike or when emerging infectious diseases make their appearance. Veterinarians, such as Prof D.Meltzer were asked to investigate the source of the Ebola outbreaks in Gabon and Zaire (DR Congo) in recent years. They help with Avian flu studies and are involved in the decisions to destroy flocks or herds such as in Foot and Mouth outbreaks. They are responsible for safe milk and meat products, for border controls to prevent sick animals entering the country, and all the other precautionary steps that have to be undertaken to keep diseases from spreading.

Biosecurity is an increasingly important issue these days, especially after September 11. Institutions and governments as a whole have to be prepared to protect their staff and populace. Here, too the veterinarian’s knowledge and expertise is needed.

THE ROLE OF THE VETERINARIAN

Veterinarians and other public health professionals have a major role in dealing with the threats to human health and the food supply from zoonotic diseases. This role includes monitoring, evaluating and responding to potential threats to the agricultural food supply, including wildlife. The veterinary librarians’ section of the MLA (Medical Librarians Association) of the USA made this topic the theme of their session during their annual conference in May this year. In 1990 David Waltner-Toews (2) highlighted the role of the veterinarian in a nuclear crisis, where he must have a working knowledge of radionuclides, and be able to identify high risk foods and high risk consumers to ensure a safe food supply.

The role as described by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) (3) includes the following aspects during disasters:

- Assessment of medical needs of animals
- medical treatment and stabilisation of animals
- animal disease surveillance
- zoonotic disease surveillance and public health assessment
- technical assistance to assure food and water quality
- hazard mitigation
- biological and chemical terrorism surveillance
- animal decontamination
- medical treatment for military/police dogs and search and rescue dogs
Pefanis and Du Preez described the role within the South African context in their article published in 1986 on national disasters and the veterinarian (4). They gave an overview of the role of the veterinarian, firstly as a paramedical assistant and secondly as a veterinary public health official.

The AVMA website provides links to other articles that focus on the role of the veterinarian, such as "Veterinarians the first line of defense in biological attack" (15 May 2003) http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/may03/030515k.asp
"Veterinarians key to bioterrorism preparedness initiatives" (15 September 2002) http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/sep02/020915h.asp
JAVMA (Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association) published an article on Biological terrorism and veterinary medicine in the United States (1 September 2000) (5).

THE CURRICULUM

Is the veterinarian of tomorrow being adequately trained for this important role, to deal with disasters and emerging diseases?

In 2000 Peter J. Cripps of the University of Liverpool, UK published his impressions of the effectiveness of veterinary education in teaching zoonoses and public health. He summarized the situation in the UK as follows: “The English veterinary schools do teach Public Health but the subject tends to refer almost exclusively to meat inspection, meat hygiene and food hygiene: little emphasis is placed on the veterinary role in wider aspects of public health such as zoonoses”.(6)

For this study the curriculum of the Faculty of Veterinary Science at the University of Pretoria (UP), the only veterinary school in South Africa, was examined and compared with veterinary schools elsewhere.

At the Faculty of Veterinary Science (UP) veterinary students are taught about emergencies and disasters in the course PHE 500 (Veterinary Public Health and Applied Epidemiology 500) (7).

The curriculum for PHE 500 includes:
- the role of the veterinary surgeon in veterinary public health;
- veterinary food hygiene and nutrition-related diseases of importance regarding food of animal origin;
- meat and milk hygiene;
- all necessary measures, including legislation, to ensure that food of animal origin is safe, sound and wholesome at all stages of production and manufacture, up to the consumer;
- veterinary aspects of environmental health (disasters and emergencies);
- zoonoses in veterinary science;
- introduction to veterinary epidemiology and the development of basic principles by the way of case studies.

In the clinical (final) year, in PHE 600 Applied Veterinary Public Health there are two rotations of tutorials and practicals per week per student for practical instruction and applied consideration of the basic principles of subject areas dealt with in PHE 500. One of these practicals is an assignment given to students by the information specialist of the Veterinary Library in association with the relevant lecturer in the Department of Veterinary Public Health. The topic of this assignment is to draw up an emergency/disaster plan for the Veterinary Animal Hospital at Onderstepoort. Students are expected to include the following types of information sources consulted: the Internet (what other faculties worldwide are doing), articles, books, and South African legislation.

The post graduate curriculum also includes studies in disaster and emergency training in the course: VPH 784 Veterinary Public Health 784 (Post Grad).

The curriculum includes:
- specific activities in Environmental Health relating to control of zoonoses of environmental origin, safe collection and disposal of dead animals;
- condemned meat and other animal wastes;
- the control of environmental pollution in animal settlements and animal industries;
prevention of occupational hazards and diseases connected with live animals and their products in both rural and urban environments in emergency and disaster situations.

Information received from librarians of other veterinary schools reveal that some include courses on disaster preparedness, such as the University of Tennessee, USA, and to a lesser extent in Norway. The University of Tennessee offers a formal course on disaster response and preparedness, including “foreign animal diseases” and their role in bioterrorism. They also cover an Emergency Management Plan. At the University of Missouri, USA, they are planning to expand their courses to cover these topics. The University of Edinburgh, UK reported that students do not receive any formal disaster preparedness training. Emerging diseases are taught in their third and fourth years within other courses.

In the USA the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine placed a proposed course outline on the Internet (8). Their program is similar to ours, covering food safety, zoonoses, foreign animal diseases (in South Africa most of these would be our local indigenous diseases), environmental health including ecology, water quality, wastes, effects of climate, disasters and disaster response, community health, occupational health, control of biohazards, epidemiology and biostatistics.

The University of Tennessee Veterinary School runs a website covering disaster preparedness and biosecurity comprehensively. Various departments are involved and links are provided to all these centres. This product was initiated for the State of Tennessee in particular and all role-players are described with their duties and tasks.

This website is a model that we can all follow, in particular its emphasis on the role of the veterinarian. (http://www.utextension.utk.edu/topics/Biosecurity/default.asp)

At the University of Missouri Veterinary Medicine School a special seminar on disaster preparedness was offered this year to interested individuals, funded by the US Dept of Home Land Security. (See Addendum A for a summary of the veterinary schools’ librarians who responded to our enquiry regarding curricula).

THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Background

The US National Library of Medicine gave the following definition of disaster management in their Collection Development Manual (9):

“Disaster management is the body of policy, administrative decisions and operational activities required to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and repair the effects of natural or man-made disasters.”

They include the following topics of interest within disaster management: health planning and policies, health facilities management, public health workforce training, communicable disease control, emergency medical services, psychological preparedness and response, risk management, health information systems (including early warning, surveillance and communication systems), and laboratory diagnosis and characterization.

The scope and emphasis of the collection is on scholarly and professional works on the health aspects of disaster management, including the management of man-made threats to the public such as bioterrorism and the use of chemical weapons. NLM may select examples of broader works on disaster management to document the public response to specific events or the social, political and cultural context of public health.

Are veterinary libraries equipped to support their faculties with information on disasters and emergency management? What resources are available, and are these resources adequate enough to satisfy the information needs of users?

Library Collections

An evaluation of the collection of the Veterinary Science Library (UP) was undertaken in April 2007 by one of the authors, to ascertain whether it can deliver the information support necessary for the veterinary practitioner and animal health worker in Africa.

Benchmarking was undertaken with the following seven veterinary school libraries collections, situated in
five countries:
University of Guelph (Canada), University of Illinois (USA), University of Missouri (USA), University of
Cambridge (UK), University of Edinburgh (UK), University of Melbourne (Australia), and the National
University of Singapore (Asia).

Two LC Subject Headings were selected to evaluate the available collection, namely Disaster medicine
and Emergency management. A subject search was done on Classification Web of the Library of
Congress. It also included possible Dewey Classification numbers for these subjects.

Figure 1 illustrates the subjects included for the purpose of this study. All the terms included in these
subject terms are clearly illustrated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disaster medicine (May Subd Geog) [R S D]</th>
<th>Emergency management (May Subd Geog) [R S D]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UF Mass casualties--Treatment</td>
<td>[HD49 (Industrial management)] [B L S D]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT Disaster relief</td>
<td>HV551.2-639 (Public welfare)] [B L S D]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RT Emergency medicine</td>
<td>UF Consequence management (Emergency management)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT Medicine</td>
<td>Disaster planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT Disaster hospitals [R]</td>
<td>Disaster preparedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disaster prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disaster relief--Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disasters--Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disasters--Preparedness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disasters--Prevention</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergencies--Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergencies--Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency preparedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency preparedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT Management</td>
<td>FN Command and control at fires [R]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RT Civil defence</td>
<td>Disaster relief [R]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT Command and control at fires [R]</td>
<td>Emergency drills [R]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disaster relief [R]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hazard mitigation [R]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incident command systems [R]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Typhoon protection [R]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disaster medicine</th>
<th>Emergency management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>362.18</td>
<td>658.477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>362.1</td>
<td>363.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>362.18068</td>
<td>363.348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>616.025</td>
<td>363.3480973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155.935</td>
<td>303.485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>363.3405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>363.3460973</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1: LC Structured subject heading and Dewey Classification Correlation Search with subject terms
disaster medicine and emergency management. The search was done on 18 April 2007 on
Classification Web of the Library of Congress.

OPAC Catalogues of eight different university libraries were accessed and compared. A search on subject
headings disaster medicine and emergency management was done. The number of entries under each
subject heading were compared to determine the scope of each collection.
Figure 2 shows the results of this exercise.

Fig. 2: Number of catalogue entries of eight university libraries.

Journals

After OCLC WorldCat and EBSCONET Subscription Management System were consulted, a list of 23 journal titles in the field of disaster medicine and emergency management was compiled. Searches were done on each library catalogue, to check availability of the specific journal titles. Addendum B lists the journals on disaster medicine and emergency management that were selected for this study. The availability of the selected journal titles in the different library collections is demonstrated.

The results of this exercise are shown in figure 3.

Fig. 3: Total journal titles (from list) available in the eight library collections.
Books

Thirteen book titles, covering subject fields disaster medicine and emergency management, were selected by using databases such as Blackwell Collection Manager, Bookfind-Online Premier, OCLC FirstSearch and OCLC WorldCat. It was difficult compiling a list applicable to veterinary science libraries alone, as the field includes many inter-disciplinary works. This list is, therefore, not complete, as there may be other important works that are not included. It was also limited to printed books, published after 2000. Conference proceedings and government publications were not included.

Addendum C lists the availability of the selected book titles in the library collections. The results of this study are illustrated in figure 4.

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**Fig 4: Total book titles (from list) available in the eight library collections.**

Figure 5 summarises the results illustrated in figures 2 - 4. It compares the total number of journal -and book titles (from the lists) available in the different library collections. The relationship between available journal titles and book titles in each library is also shown in this figure.

---

**Fig 5: Journal and book titles (from list) available in the eight library collections.**
Results

Figure 2 shows the total number of catalogue entries of eight university libraries with subject headings "disaster medicine" and "emergency management." Figures 2 to 4 illustrate the availability of selected journal and book titles. It is, however, interesting to note that although the University of Illinois and the University of Missouri have the most catalogue entries, they do not perform best when the selected titles were compared. This can be due to the fact that these two libraries have included grey literature specific to the United States, which the other countries have not included in their catalogues.

From this study it was seen that the 3 most held journal titles are:
- Disaster management & response (Online): DMR.,
- International Journal of Disaster Medicine
- Internet Journal of Rescue and Disaster Medicine.

The most popular book titles are
- Malaria control during mass population movements and natural disasters / Peter B Bloland; Holly A Williams
- Public health management of disasters: the practice guide / Linda Young Landesman.

It is interesting that although the entire catalogue of each library was consulted, covering both veterinary and human medicine, this study is applicable to veterinary science collections, and two of the book titles held by most libraries are of veterinary science interest!

The situation in South Africa

It was decided to repeat this exercise and compare the collection of UP with other universities in South Africa to compare their coverage of these subject areas.

The following university library collections were compared: University of Cape Town (UCT), University of Stellenbosch (US), University of the Free State (UFS), University of Johannesburg (UJ), University of the Witwatersrand (WITS), University of South Africa (UNISA) and University of Kwazulu Natal (UKZN).

The findings are illustrated in figure 6.

![Catalogue entries in South African university libraries](image)

**Fig 6: Number of catalogue entries per South African university library.**
South African university library collections were compared using the 3 most popular journal titles and the 3 most owned book titles – as obtained from the above study.

The results of this exercise are illustrated in figure 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Pretoria</th>
<th>Cape Town</th>
<th>Stellenbosch</th>
<th>Free State</th>
<th>Johannesburg</th>
<th>Witwatersrand</th>
<th>UNISA</th>
<th>Kwazulu Natal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disaster management &amp; response (Online): DMR.</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Journal of Disaster Medicine</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Journal of Rescue and Disaster Medicine</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicable disease control in emergencies : a field manual / edited by M.A. Connolly</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaria control during mass population movements and natural disasters / Peter B Bloland; Holly A Williams</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public health management of disasters : the practice guide / Linda Young Landesman.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL OWNED (%)</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 7: List of selected journals and books on disaster medicine and emergency management.

The availability in the different South African university library collections is demonstrated in fig 8.

Fig. 8: Journal and book titles from selected lists, owned by South African university libraries.
Conclusion

International study

The purpose of this study was to benchmark the Veterinary Science Library, University of Pretoria with other veterinary libraries in terms of collection development, especially in the field of disaster management. When the catalogue entries of the selected libraries in various countries were compared, the University of Pretoria didn’t perform well. After a journal list and a book list with relevant titles in the fields of disaster medicine and emergency management were compiled and the different libraries compared according to these titles, the University of Pretoria’s collection gives average coverage. The conclusion can be made that although the catalogue of the University of Pretoria does not hold all the titles in the field of disaster medicine and emergency management, it does have enough of the essential sources to serve in the needs of its users.

It is, however, a matter of concern that the highest percentage of the listed journal titles owned, is only 21%, and the highest percentage of the listed book titles owned is 38%. This phenomenon may show an overall lack of library resources in the fields of disaster medicine and emergency management in the collections of all the libraries in this study.

It will be interesting to continue this study by comparing available Internet sources in the mentioned fields. Interlending and document delivering may also play a role in the collection development process. This calls for further research.

National study

It is clear from the above study on South African university libraries that 7 of the 8 collections show an overall lack of selected information resources on disaster medicine and emergency management. In this study the University of Pretoria performed best. Five of the six titles on the list are available at the University of Pretoria. However, the one that is not in the UP collection is available at the University of the Free State. Thus, all the listed titles are available in South Africa, and can be accessed through Interlending.

Addendum D lists the library catalogues that were examined in this study.

WEBSITES ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT

On searching the Internet for appropriate and relevant information to support veterinarians involved in disasters and emerging diseases management, it soon became apparent that there was no single site gathering all the bits and pieces of information together. This was not only the case for South Africa. A recent editorial in Nature (10) highlighted the scenario in the USA where different government bodies are working on food safety (15 different agencies operating under at least 30 different statutes, causing “a state of disarray”).

We started with a Google search to find reliable South African sites with appropriate information on disaster preparedness and/or emerging diseases management. We found very little. (See Summary of Websites in Addendum E).

The major veterinary and health sciences role players in the country such as the South African Veterinary Association, South African Medical Association, Department of Agriculture (Veterinary Services), Agricultural Research Council - Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute and Agricultural Research Council - Production Animals, Department of Health, and Faculties of Health Sciences at the Universities do not feature these topics on their websites.

The (National) Department of Agriculture listed the heads of the section dealing with food and animal production disasters (www.nda.agric.za/docs/who's_who/disaster.htm) but no further information was given. The 2 main government sites dealing with food safety are a) Directorate Veterinary Services South Africa (www.nda.agric.za/vetweb) and b) South African Government Services (www.services.gov.za).

The latter includes various importation documents such as for animal vaccines, import of fresh meat and import of animals and animal products. The site under a) lists the importation requirements and procedures for the importation of meat (www.nda.agric.za/vetweb/Import/Info/Meat.htm).
The development of a website by the Veterinary Science Library (UP) to serve as a one-stop e-information source for the country's animal health workers was a logical next step. Details that had to be decided first, before the site could be set up, were the following:

- who would be the target audience
- which experts should be consulted concerning the content
- what type of information should be included
- what potentially dangerous information should be omitted
- with whom should we collaborate

It was clear that the audience would be primarily the students of the Faculty. But it was essential to include information as well for veterinary practitioners and the relevant government departments, and even the lay public who would need to know what to expect in times of crisis regarding their pets. Farmers would also benefit from information on the site regarding disasters, such as floods, and their effects on their production animals and how to deal with them in emergencies. Much can be learned, for example, from Hurricane Katrina experiences in the USA.

State veterinarians also need to find relevant information quickly in emergencies. By including all the legal documentation required for import and export of animals and quarantine regulations of South African and other countries, the proposed site would help to make information more accessible to animal owners and veterinarians, both private and state.

The lecturer responsible for the course at the Faculty advised us to base the content on her lecture material, enabling students to find additional relevant information through this website.

The world's best veterinary website is that of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), as confirmed by the lecturer at our Faculty responsible for these topics (www.avma.org).

We decided to base our website content on AVMA's Disaster site, as well as that of the University of Tennessee. The coverage is comprehensive. The website of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in the USA is also an important and helpful site (www.cdc.gov).

It has an Emergency preparedness and Response section that features Agents, Diseases and other threats (www.bt.cdc.gov).

In the UK the website of the Institute of Animal Health (Pirbright Laboratory) gives useful coverage of outbreaks, in particular the Foot and Mouth outbreak of 2004 (www.iah.bbsrc.ac.uk). The site includes sections on Emerging diseases and Notifiable diseases.

DEFRA is a government body in the UK (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) (www.defra.gov.uk) with the latest information on animal disease outbreaks, including outbreaks in other countries such as South Africa.

The most important and trustworthy international organisations' websites are those of the OIE (World Organisation of Animal Health), WHO (World Health Organisation), and the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation).

Our site would provide links to all these relevant pages.

It is essential that users can embark on database searching from the site. We therefore, provided links to free databases (PubMed and Agricola) as well as to the subscriber databases that can only be accessed by UP students and staff (CAB, Medline, Zoological Record, Biological Abstracts, etc.)

**Biosecurity**

As the Faculty recently appointed a Biosecurity and Biocontainment manager to promote the implementation of acceptable biosecurity measures and to liaise with the State Veterinary Authorities, it was necessary to include the Faculty's needs for relevant information on the site as well. As a teaching establishment the Faculty has to set an example to the students to sensitisise them to the absolute importance of applying appropriate levels of biosecurity, such as isolation and restriction of the movement of animals and humans in sensitive, high-risk zones to prevent the exportation of infectious agents or noxious materials.
WEBSITE FOR AFRICA'S VETERINARIANS, ANIMAL HEALTH WORKERS, AND OTHERS
Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management for Africa (www.ais.up.ac.za/vet/disasters)

The following topics were selected for the website:

1. Types of disasters / emergencies: bioterrorism emergencies, chemical emergencies, mass casualties, natural disasters (bush fires), radiation emergencies, man-made disasters (oil spills),
5. Role of the Veterinarian
7. Guidelines : a) WHO
   b) South African legislation: Animal Diseases Act, Food Safety Act, Safe Laboratory Practices etc.
8. Epidemiology (Tracking diseases, Disease monitoring)
9. Formulating emergency plans
10. Biosecurity
11. Disaster preparedness: Actions (preventative and during an outbreak)

Links to full text open access articles will also be included so that the latest research will be available to all users.
Each topic as listed above, will be described, with links to relevant, evaluated sites.

It was decided to follow the example of the University of Tennessee's "Hot Topics" and News sections of their Biosecurity and Disaster management site and include these sections as well.

It is imperative that we keep ourselves up-to-date on relevant issues as they break in the news headlines of our local TV and radio stations so that our site will never be out-of-date. CNN.com, BBC-News and News24.com are consulted regularly. Fortunately Google's Alerts are a great aid in this respect. The News Sections of the OIE and WHO websites are helpful as well.

To ensure that the information placed on the site is reliable, up-to-date, and relevant for the needs of all animal health workers in South Africa and beyond its borders, the information specialists will liaise with the experts at the Faculty as well as the State Veterinary Departments and the ARC's Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute and Production Animals Institute at Irene.

We are taking note of the development of an exciting initiative at the University of Illinois, USA (11) called "One Med". It would benefit South Africa to follow suit. The University's College of Veterinary Medicine is taking the lead in creating the Illinois Center for One Medicine at the university. It will be a 'center of excellence in research, training and public engagement for issues associated with animal, ecosystem and human health.
It will work to improve state and national preparedness for and response to natural and intentional exposures of biological, chemical and physical agents. Attention will be placed on disease processes at the interface of human, animal and public health".

CONCLUSION
To ensure a relevant and up-to-date website, or Portal, on Disaster and Emergency Management, including Emerging diseases topics, we will have to develop an effective content management system. This will include such aspects as content development philosophy, website training for staff and clients, website marketing, usability testing, testing of links, and keeping website statistics to evaluate use (12).
To optimize the accessibility of our website careful attention will be paid to applying metadata.
As far as our information sources are concerned, the collection coverage will have to be expanded. We will use the results of the benchmarking study to motivate for additional funds to fill the gaps in our collection.

Our involvement with curriculum development at our Faculty will continue to be a necessary aspect of our role as information specialists, to ensure that we provide the information support required.

This is a dynamic and challenging field and the information specialist is an essential part of the team educating the student veterinarian about his role in disaster preparedness and emergency management. By ensuring that the library offers optimal access to information sources for the effective management of disasters and emergencies, the information specialist is a vital role player in promoting the health of both animals and humans.

REFERENCES


