

# CHD GROUP INTERVIEWS DR FATEMEH REZAEI - HEALTH AND DISASTER EXPERT

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**CHD Group interviews Dr. Fatemeh Rezaei, Assistant Professor in Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, Iran who has completed PhD on the topic of "Health in Disasters and Emergencies."**

Dr. Fatemeh Rezaei has been selected under the prestigious scholarship of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India to visit India and learn a short course on "Sustainable Development and Global Goals." She is also CHD Group Country Representative of Iran. Dr. Fatemeh Rezaei has completed her masters in health management. During the doctorate course, she was selected as a pioneer student in the field of publishing student journals. Her research focuses more on "risk management", "disaster management", "community-based management", and "biological hazards". She is also a lecturer in service training and courses at the university and has held training courses in the areas of "hospital preparedness with chemical accidents", "crisis management" and so on. She has been a lecturer in management and entrepreneurship courses for medical engineering at the

JAHAD Higher Education Institute.





## **Dr. Fatemeh Rezaei, CHD Group Country Representative, Iran**

**Can you tell us how did you develop your interest in humanitarian work and disaster risk**

## reduction?

Firstly, I want to thank you for providing this opportunity and say that it is my honor to work with [CHD Group](#). Well, referring to your question, what I am saying is that my interest to disasters and emergency subject originates when I started my MSc Thesis. During those days, I started to develop a comprehensive risk assessment tools for evaluating clinical risks in hospitals. I understood that although various risk assessment tools developed for health systems, they failed by ignoring to cover indispensable aspects of disaster situations. I worked on ECM model to prioritize risk with organizational, human, and technical origins. Accordingly, I decided to study on risk origins when a disaster occurs. Therefore, I continued my education in the field of health, disaster and emergencies.

## **Health service management is a very important area of conversation for stakeholders in the field of health systems delivery, tell us how must policies be framed in this area and what hospitals must do?**

Based on my experience, the strength point of a managers in health services deeply depends on the way they get clinical personnel involved in any critical decision-making processes. Although, involvement of para-clinical and logistics personnel is as much important, it is a reality that the heart of hospitals is in hands of clinical personnel. We should consider all their worries and give voice to them for reaching to missions and goals.



**Dr. Fatemeh Rezaei, while addressing delegates at a conference**

**What do you recommend as a good way for community health management for different countries?**

As a matter of fact, I have to introduce you the new concepts by Lee Soo-man as "cultural technology" to show how community health management should occur. It has started a new stream of thought that give a sense of responsibility to communities about their health. It is not solely the duty of governments to pay health expenses, manage resources, organize and deliver health. Communities can intervene where governments focus less and make a better society by participation.

**Can you tell us some best practices in the field of health management and disasters that you have come across and what are the learnings?**

Unity of command in emergency situations should be considered even in health systems. In the other word, health systems need to set the managerial system which is adaptable to national and regional disaster management system to reach the unity of command. Additionally, supply chain management should be considered for flood of resources deployed to the affected areas. As I saw,

during first year of covid-19 pandemic, there were lots of expired medicine, useless donations, and stolen medical supply in health centers. Notably, sometime the use of resources in emergencies situation even exceed to normal condition due to mismanagement of resources.

**What is your message for academicians and students at Universities?**

That is always my favorite question. Well, in my experience, if I were student, I would prefer to handle some really practical projects and start to work on to run a start-up or a small business. The fact is that we cannot make a change overnight to the world by one doctoral thesis or a project always.



A capture at the University Campus - Dr. Rezaei

**You are a young leader and an inspiration for lot of people in Iran and around the region, how do you feel young students must be motivated to pursue their PhD studies and what are the options for them?**

You know that PhD. abbreviation stands for philosophy of Doctorate. For that reason we are not just



developing our knowledge or area of expertise at PhD level. We have to wide our horizon to the life. Student should reach to a level in that they follow critical thinking, mutual understanding and knowing how to be influential in their community by promoting communication skills , marketing and managerial skills, team project skills and how to decide in pressurized situations.

**In your opinion, how do we translate theory based research into field level practical implementation and work?**

In my point of view, research team should start with identifying all individual who their project will have an impact upon. After which they must network with all stakeholders and gatekeepers. Third, creating a functional team to work on all pitfalls and limitations that was not seen in the theory based research. After designing an operational plan and assigning the responsibility of all, it is time to do a pilot study. You can understand that any a big difference would not be achieved suddenly and takes time.



**Dr. Fatemeh Rezaei - Health and Disaster Risk Reduction Expert**

**What is are your hobbies?**

Studying novel, listening to music, walking and travelling

### **Can you suggest five good books for students to read?**

- How to stay smart in a smart world by *Gerd Gigerenzer*
- Collective illusions Edited by *Todd Rose*
- Rationality by *Steven Pinker*
- Upstream by *Dan Heath*
- The Broken Ladder by *Keith Payne*

### **What is your life's purpose and what message would you like to give young students?**

In the present circumstance, my purpose is to show the right way to my students and direct them in a way that is aligned with their interest and skills and expertise. It is important to recognize that if we are able to provide inspiration for life to one person and lead her/him the right way, we do our responsibility to the world. I would like to create better opportunities and avenues for my students to learn from and shine.

*Thank you Dr. Fatemeh Rezaei for your time and support in answering our questions which will be shared among interested readers.*