Interdisciplinary research that makes a difference

The QUT Centre for Emergency and Disaster Management (CEDM) coordinates and conducts interdisciplinary research to understand and reduce the impacts of emergencies and disasters on health, community and infrastructure.

The centre fosters interdisciplinary collaboration between QUT researchers and our industry and research partners, and promotes the field of emergency and disaster management research as an emerging, selective area of research concentration and strength at QUT.
Research

Centre research is in three integrated and coordinated programs that aim to better understand and reduce the impacts of emergencies and disasters.

Health
Program Leader: Professor Michele Clark

The Health Program identifies the impacts of emergencies and disasters on people’s health and wellbeing, and designs and evaluates strategies aimed at reducing those impacts, including:

- understanding the effects that emergencies and disasters have on Australian health and wellbeing in the short and long term
- identifying, designing and evaluating strategies to reduce the effects of emergencies and disasters on health and wellbeing
- developing and testing strategies to improve the resilience of the health system so it can better prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters.

Community
Program Leader: Professor Robert Lonie

The Community Program identifies the impacts of emergencies and disasters on society, identifies the components of community resilience, and devises strategies to improve emergency and disaster response and recovery, including:

- understanding community interactions and social processes that promote resilience, particularly for disadvantaged and socially marginalised groups.
- exploring approaches that empower community members to engage with emergency and disaster authorities concerning preparation and response processes
- understanding the role of social media in all phases of emergencies and disasters.

Infrastructure
Program Leader: Dr Paul Barnes

The Infrastructure Program tests and applies approaches to risk-based decision making and consequence assessment to disaster preparedness and response frameworks, including:

- increasing use of risk- and hazard-mapping, consequence assessment and anticipatory modelling to guide planning and to inform response and adaptation
- enhancing situation awareness and decision-making frameworks for coordinating responses to wide-area disasters such as floods and other natural disasters
- identifying the elements of a resilient economy and requirements for system responsiveness and business continuity within critical industries.

People

The centre is a wide-ranging interdisciplinary research collaboration, engaging researchers from all QUT faculties with a network of national and international partners and collaborators.

Centre Director Professor Gerry FitzGerald has a long history of leadership roles in emergency health services and health system management including 10 years as Queensland Ambulance Service Commissioner and three years as Chief Health Officer for Queensland.

The centre is managed by an executive representing all QUT faculties, and an advisory board with industry and research representation advises on strategy. Researchers engage with the centre through a College of Fellows that meets annually.

Partnerships

Centre researchers collaborate with industry and research partners through projects funded by the Australian Research Council and the National Health and Medical Research Council. These projects produce research outcomes that are relevant to end-users including public and private health agencies and services, disaster management authorities, state and local governments, non-government organisations, and the private sector.

The centre is actively formalising relationships with Australian and international research and industry partners, and affiliating individuals with the centre as QUT adjuncts and as members of the centre’s College of Fellows.

Collaboration and engagement

The centre aims to facilitate interdisciplinary research collaborations within and outside QUT, and to improve the visibility of QUT’s emergency and disaster management research.

Centre activities to identify and foster collaborative research include an annual QUT Emergency and Disaster Workshop, and leadership of a bid for a major national research centre in the area of emergency health.

The centre is enhancing QUT’s research profile by establishing the quarterly CEDM Forum on topics in the intersection of research and public interest, and by formalising relationships with key industry and research partners.

Study

The centre provides opportunities for postgraduate study and research training and also offers continuing professional development and customised education.

The centre offers a vibrant and supportive research environment to attract and support research higher degree students, early career researchers and visitors, and provides scholarship funding for selected students.

A suite of continuing professional development courses is available from the centre in concentrated block mode to strengthen leadership skills for developing and maintaining effective response and recovery arrangements.

Consulting and commercial research

The centre is actively seeking consulting and commercial research opportunities to supplement publicly funded research projects.

The centre is supported by all QUT faculties and centre researchers provide expert advice and conduct external reviews for government and industry clients across the emergency and disaster sectors.

Centre researchers also work closely with industry partners to conduct commercial research that meets specific end-user requirements, either as new research or by applying existing research.

Contact

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