Reviewer's report

Title: Responding to the Deaf in Disasters: Establishing the Need for Systematic Training for State-Level Emergency Management Agencies and Community Organizations

Version: 2 Date: 6 November 2012

Reviewer: Neil McDevitt

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1. GENERAL COMMENT (Discretionary) – Consider replacing the term “first responder” with “emergency responder”. The people a citizen will interact with during an emergency response can vary from the classic “first” responders (fire/police/EMS) to secondary, tertiary, and even more response levels. An example in the current on-going response to Superstorm Sandy:

1. Fire/police/EMS have completed and conducted initial sweeps.
2. Public works crews are clearing roads
3. State workers are doing damage assessments
4. FEMA, etc. etc..

2. Page 4 – “Rationale for Evaluation Research” – (Minor) – It should be noted that this is not just a Deaf/HH issue – this is true across the disability spectrum. It should also be noted there is, again, little/no research, evaluation, or independent understanding of the efficacy of preparedness efforts that target the whole community rather than “most” of the community. However, as outlined in the Background section, it’s clear that the Deaf/HH community is most impacted.

3. Results – One good example missing from this is the Illinois State Police’s Deaf/HH initiative put together after two deaf people were shot and killed by police officers in IL in 1998. The initiative developed a picture book with state-wide Deaf/HH resources placed in all ILSP cruisers as well (link: https://sites.google.com/a/cepintdi.org/cepin-website/course-offerings/awr-186/files-information ) as a module for the ILSP cadet on-boarding training processes. Master Sgt. John Garner is the POC for this and can be reached at writebrained@yahoo.com – Since this effort has never, to my knowledge, been studied/peer-reviewed, it may not be a good candidate for inclusion but worth checking into. I’m listing this as “MINOR”.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare I have no competing interests