Disaster resilience and people with functional needs

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PolicyLab's Sophia Jan published a Perspective article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* describing how natural disasters reveal the vulnerabilities for patients with what are known as "functional needs." These patients are dependent on home nursing, personal care attendants, or electric medical technologies. The piece calls for several reforms to enhance resilience among people with functional needs, including: expanding electronic medical records, which are more accessible in the event of a disaster; supporting innovation to develop new disaster-ready technologies; increasing data-sharing among agencies that serve these patients; improving communication and connectedness of patients through social media; and viewing such patients as assets rather than vulnerabilities in disaster planning, response, and recovery.

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