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**ASSESSMENT OF FIRE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN PUBLIC
AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS: A CASE STUDY OF FOUR HOSPITALS IN
DAR ES SALAAM REGION**

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ABSTRACT

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Fire incidences are a common phenomenon in Tanzania despite the country's limited hospital fires records. This study intended to assess fire emergency preparedness in public and private hospitals of Dar es Salaam Region by covering the specific hospital preparedness in fire emergency policies, fire safety equipment, signage and infrastructure, fire hazards and vulnerable groups, firefighting knowledge and fire preparedness plans, thereby identifying areas needing improvements. A comparative approach applied adopted mixed methods design encompassing both quantitative and qualitative methods. Primary data were collected using questionnaires, semi-structured interview and observation. Secondary data were obtained through reviewing published dissertations, articles, journals textbooks and documents from various websites. One hundred and seven (107) respondents from public and private hospitals were selected for the study. Quantitative data was analysed descriptively using Ms Excel. Qualitative data was analysed using content analysis. The findings showed that the selected private hospitals prepared for fire emergency preparedness by 77% compared to 35% in public hospitals by having fire policies and fire safety items that were working. Firefighting knowledge, trainings and drills in the selected private hospitals was 72% compared to 36% in public hospitals. Availability of fire safety items in vulnerable people and training and allocation of supervisors was 70% in private hospitals compared to 32% in public hospital. However, both public and private hospitals portrayed awareness on firefighting activities, vulnerable groups, and fire hazards. The study recommended that hospitals should have fire emergency preparedness plans, policies, sufficient equipment, signage and infrastructure and monitoring and evaluation programs to enhance fire emergency preparedness.

Keywords: Fire emergency, Fire preparedness, Fire fighting equipment