



International Health Regulations (IHR)

Forum

Stadtschlaining, Austria

14 – 18 March 2016

17 December 2015

Original: English

Scope and purpose

Background

The International Health Regulations (2005) provide a legal framework for actions to prevent, protect against and respond to the international spread of disease. The States Parties to the IHR have jointly agreed to develop, strengthen and maintain core capacities to ensure global public health security at all times and during a public health emergency.

Of special focus herewith are Newly Independent States and Western Balkans, as some of these countries have requested an extension for the IHR implementation process due to lacking core capacities. WHO Regional Office for Europe will therefore conduct an IHR Forum with the aim of providing technical training, as well as a platform for exchange of common practices and ideas and facilitate experience sharing between responsible technical personnel from the target countries

General objective

The purpose of this IHR Forum is to strengthen critical human resources engaged to set-up and manage systems for securing global public health under the IHR framework through global exchange of ideas, best practices, encountered challenges and applied solutions, and to develop communication capacities for efficient international collaboration. Professionals will be prepared to apply fundamentals of IHR on a quotidian routine basis, as well as during the management of a public health emergency. The training course will engage participants through various media and techniques, including case studies, scenarios and modular learning. Given the breadth and diversity of the participants and internationally recognized experts, the platform will serve as a veritable international exchange. Benefitting from the training course and technical interchange, participants will be able to reflect and expound upon their knowledge gained and subsequently augment their national IHR implementation while further disseminating best practices with colleagues within their home institutions.

Specific objectives

Specific objectives of the IHR Forum will be for participants to:

- Share experiences, lessons learned and best practice on the use of IHR on a routine basis;
- Discuss key issues and challenges around specific topics (e.g. national IHR core capacities at points of entry, food-borne and infectious diseases under IHR, chemical and radio-nuclear events under IHR, management of emergencies, IHR monitoring and evaluation) and share ideas about possible ways to address these challenges in liaison with internationally recognized IHR experts;

- Strengthen their institution's capacity to coordinate the response to a public health emergency;
- Develop tools for effective communication;
- Facilitate bilateral dialogue among countries for further activities which can prospectively help to support the capacity building process in WHO European Region.

The training course is aimed at reinforcing participant's capacities to:

- Inform/train relevant national stakeholders on the scope and key provisions of the IHR;
- Contribute to effective intersectoral collaboration for responding to public health events as set out in the IHR;
- Contribute to a coordinated international response to public health events as set out in the IHR;
- Communicate with WHO and relevant stakeholders as set out in the IHR;
- Contribute to prevention, detection and response to public health events at points of entry;
- Carry out health risk assessment using the all-hazards approach in the context of IHR;
- Trigger appropriate legislative, regulatory and organizational reforms to facilitate IHR implementation.