

Speakers:

- Bettina Menne, Coordinator Sustainable Development and Health, WHO Regional Office for Europe
- Charlotte Marchandise, Elected member of the City Council of Rennes, France

- Nancy Fullman, Scientific Advisor at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), Seattle, USA
- Hans Kluge, Director Health Systems and Public Health, WHO Regional Office for Europe

PLENARY 3

Public health resources - core capacities to address the threat of communicable diseases

Organised by: ASPHER, ECDC, EHMA

Moderators: Katarzyna Czabanowska, ASPHER, and Karl Ekdahl, ECDC

Robust public health capacities and capabilities are essential elements in prevention and control of communicable diseases. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) assists the EU Member States to 'have sufficient numbers of trained specialists [...], and to have a capability to define health measures to control disease outbreaks'. ECDC also supports the implementation of Decision No. 1082/2013/EU, by providing technical advice and expert guidance aiming at strengthening public health emergency preparedness (PHEP) across the EU.

The logic model for PHEP makes a distinction between capacities and capabilities. Capacities represent the resources – infrastructure, policies and procedures, knowledgeable and trained personnel – that a public health system has to draw upon. Capacities necessarily reflect variations in Member States' government and private-sector organisations. Capabilities, on the other hand, describe what Member States are expected to achieve during an emergency, and can be described in a consistent way for all countries. Capacities and capabilities are both important for an effective emergency response; however, depending on the context, different kinds of capacities may be needed to achieve the required capabilities. (See <http://bit.ly/2MibCIu>)

In the period 2014 – 2017, ECDC conducted a number of case studies to review public health preparedness in EU/EEA countries. Cases studies were built using a health threat (e.g. MERS-CoV, polio, Ebola and tick borne diseases) that could

cause infectious disease outbreak and review focused, among other elements, on interoperability of plans between sectors and cross border aspect. In response to the Ebola outbreak, the Centre also visited three Member States with the aim to review their preparedness to respond to highly contagious haemorrhagic diseases. All assessed countries demonstrated to have a cadre of highly motivated and well-performing experts, even in settings where salaries have been severely cut.

With increasing urgency, developing and maintaining a well-trained and competent public health workforce, as an asset for the future of the public health, is becoming a clear priority. The trends affecting public health workforce demographics - including aspects linked to recruitment, retention and ageing of the workforce - call for policy attention to ensure that this particular public health asset does not get depleted. Other trends and new paradigms in public health, like big data and molecular diagnostics, call for a new generation of public health specialists with competencies relevant to the traditional as well as new facets of communicable disease prevention and control.

The aim of this one-hour session is to stir the debate around the essential public health capacities and capabilities needed to effectively address prevention and control of communicable diseases in the European context. The session will start with a keynote speaker, followed by a lively expert panel discussion reflecting different perspectives: policy, education and training, practice perspective, including an example of good practice. Key question addressed:

How to ensure the development of competent and effective public health workforce able to address the issues related to emergency preparedness and response in times of new and evolving paradigms?

PLENARY 4

Public's awareness of public health challenges: how to get our public health messages heard?

Organised by: European Commission and EUPHA

Chairs: Isabel de la Mata, DG Sante, European Commission and Natasha Azzopardi Muscat, EUPHA

In a time of internet-research and twitter-truths, it becomes more and more important for the whole public health community to learn how to engage the public to support, participate in and make healthy choices. How can we raise the public's awareness on public health challenges? How do we increase the impact of the messages we want to convey? How can and should we communicate so we have a larger impact of what we are trying to convey?

It is important that scientists – in this case public health scientists – learn how to communicate and work with politicians, journalists and citizens to get the right message across. In this plenary session, we are looking at this from different angles.

After an introduction to health communication and persuasion, a panel consisting of two scientists, a journalist and a policy-translator will provide insight on how they have implemented ideas to raise the impact of public health messages and what they needed to implement these ideas. The two chairs of the session will then summarize the lessons learned in this session.

How to get our messages heard? - Aljoša Bagola, Pristop, Slovenia

If the end goal of creative endeavors in art is catharsis, then the end goal of creative endeavors in communication is effectiveness. Modern technology brings new possibilities and challenges for effective communication. With social media presence in every household and, through handheld devices, practically every pocket, an effective communication can reach very far. Even though messages delivered through social media are short and may seem to require relatively little preparation, they are, in reality, derived from a script that is extensive and well thought-out. During the presentation, strategies and techniques employed in social media advertising and possible implications for public health interventions will be discussed. Panel:

- Carlo Signorelli, Italian Society of Hygiene, Preventive Medicine and Public Health, on the increasing threats of vaccine hesitancy in Italy
- Benedicte Carlsen, Department of Health Promotion and Development Faculty of Psychology at the University of Bergen, Norway
- Christina Berndt, Health editor, *Suddeutsche Zeitung*, Germany
- Jan Eyckmans, Head of Communication, Federal Ministry of Health, Belgium