

Concept note

Emergency Medical Team Regional Meeting WHO European Region Strengthening the Emergency Medical Teams initiative For All-Hazards Emergencies Preparedness, Alert and Response

Dates: 17-18 April 2018

Location: Brussels, Belgium

Introduction

WHO Member States are faced with a broad range of emergencies resulting from various hazards, differing in scale, complexity and consequences. Preparing for and responding effectively to such emergencies are among the most pressing challenges facing Member States. The mission of the Emergency Medical Team (EMT) initiative is to reduce the loss of life and prevent long-term disability as a result of outbreaks and/or Sudden-onset-disasters through the rapid deployment and efficient tasking of Emergency Medical Teams adhering to international minimum standards.

With the growth and increased participation worldwide in the EMT initiative, more than half of the WHO classified international EMTs are from the WHO European region. The EMT European Regional meeting brings together members of the regional EMT community to engage in discussion, debate and workshops on a range of issues of direct relevance to teams and policy makers alike. This will be the first EMT regional meeting in the WHO European region.

Rationale

Providing a physical space and forum for EMTs, governments and policy makers and other interested parties to come together to shape the agenda for the initiative in the WHO European region is of critical importance because it encourages collaboration between teams, fosters linkages across operations, policy and geography, facilitates learning for new and existing EMTs, generates engagement and participation, and supports existing resource mobilization efforts.

Purpose of the workshop

The main purpose of the workshop is to facilitate discussion and agreement between member states and EMT providers on topics such as EMT coordination, training, exercises and capacity building as well as experience sharing and lessons learnt on regional response operations. The workshop will provide a forum for participants to shape a regional agenda on the implementation of the EMT initiative in the WHO European region, jointly with WHO and DG ECHO. It will also provide an opportunity to raise awareness on global level developments of the EMT initiative as well as for stakeholders in the region to contribute to these developments.



This will also be the opportunity for the European EMT community to contribute to the on-going revision of the Classification and Minimum Standards for Emergency Medical Teams (Blue Book). A note on this topic will be circulated before the meeting.

Participation

All countries and organizations in the WHO European region with an interest in EMT response and capacity building work will be invited to participate in the meeting, with a particular focus on:

- Countries with WHO-classified international EMTs
- Countries at high risk of sudden-onset disasters, requiring EMT response, and/or those creating national EMT capacities.
- Non-governmental Organizations participating in the EMT initiative

It is planned to invite a maximum of three representatives per country / organization who have policy and/or operational expertise within the respective Governments/Ministries of Health/organization on matters pertaining to EMT capacity strengthening and response, as well as team leaders of existing Emergency Medical Teams.