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ECDC and key stakeholders discuss launching an annual European antibiotic awareness day

On 16 October, ECDC met with MEPs, Commission officials, Member State representatives, professional bodies and public health experts over lunch in the European Parliament to discuss the need to raise public awareness on antibiotic resistance.

John Bowis MEP (UK, EPP-DE), who hosted the lunch, opened the debate by stressing the risks to human health if we fail to take antibiotic resistance seriously. He made reference to the European Parliament's Economic and Scientific Policy Options Assessment group (STOA) which published a report in 2006 emphasising the need for immediate action to contain antibiotic resistance.

In her presentation, ECDC Director Zsuzsanna Jakab set out the severity of the problem and stated that, 'The growing resistance of microbes to commonly used antibiotics is a major threat to public health'. She went on to highlight case studies of Member States that have been able to reverse this trend through successful national information campaigns on rational antibiotic use. Finally, she announced plans for the launch of a European awareness day in autumn 2008 to build on successful national campaigns.

Strengthening ties: ECDC meets with the competent bodies

On 8 November 2007, ECDC completed a series of four introductory meetings with its newly designated Competent Bodies to discuss future cooperation. ECDC's Founding Regulation requires it to work with 'Competent Bodies' in the Member States on a range of activities from disease surveillance to outbreak response and field investigation. Over the past year ECDC has been working with Member States to identify which organisations should be designated as Competent Bodies and an initial list was approved by ECDC Management Board in June. The final list will be published on ECDC's website shortly.



John Bowis MEP, Zsuzsanna Jakab, Vincent Houdry (SANCO)

Senior officials from the Commission, Octavi Quintana-Trias, Director of Health Research at DG RTD, and Vincent Houdry on behalf of Andrzej Rys, Director of Public Health at DG SANCO, endorsed the idea of a European antibiotic awareness day, which would complement current Commission strategies on antibiotic resistance.

Representing the Portuguese Presidency of the EU, Jorge Menezes, health attaché, introduced national experts from France and Belgium who highlighted success from their own national campaigns on rational antibiotic use. Benoît Schlemmer, Professor at the University of Paris VII and Herman Goossens, Professor at the University of Antwerp described the objectives of their national campaigns to increase public awareness on microbial resistance and knowledge about the role of antibiotics, and to decrease use of antibiotics in out-patients. Both speakers showed how the campaigns had contributed to decreasing outpatient antibiotic consumption, which is expected to lead to decreasing resistance levels. A lively discussion moderated by John Bowis MEP, followed the presentations.

For more information: http://ecdc.europa.eu/About_us/director/speeches/07_10_16.html



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European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
Tomtebodavägen 11 A, SE-17183 Stockholm - Sweden

Tel. +46 8 58 0000, info@ecdc.europa.eu

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The Commission and ECDC working side by side



Robert Madelin and Zsuzsanna Jakab

On 6–7 November 2007, Robert Madelin, the Commission's Director General for Health and Consumer Protection and Zsuzsanna Jakab co-hosted a meeting of scientific committee chairmen from the Commission (DG SANCO, DG Employment) and several EU agencies (European Food Safety Authority, European Medicines Agency and other stakeholders such as WHO). The purpose of the meeting was to promote common ways of conducting risk assessment and to discuss best practice.

Season's greetings from ECDC!

2007 has seen ECDC attaining some important milestones, both in the development of our infrastructure and the delivery of our scientific programme. Of particular strategic importance are:

- the adoption by our Management Board of a Multi-annual Strategic Programme covering 2007–2013;

- the agreement on a list of Competent Bodies in the Member States (see page 1);

- the delivery of ECDC's first ever Epidemiological Report in June 2007. This analysis of the 'state of communicable diseases' in the EU enabled us to identify the key challenges Europe faces;

- the launch of the independent evaluation of ECDC, currently underway.

In 2007 some concrete results have also been achieved. Let me point out three significant ones among many others:

- ECDC has integrated the surveillance of a number of key diseases, including HIV and TB for which the surveillance will be done jointly with WHO EURO for the whole European Region (53 countries). From 2008 onward all EU-level surveillance data are being filed into a single database held at ECDC;

- an Emergency Operation Centre was developed from which ECDC can support the coordination of the EU response to multi-country incidents. This is already working and will be fully integrated with its counterparts in the Member States in 2008;

- a number of scientific opinions have been produced for Member States;

- The taking over of the operation of the EWRS for supporting the Commission could be mentioned here as it is one of the key point of the founding regulation.

But great challenges await ECDC in 2008. Our work plan is a realistic but ambitious one. The Centre will continue to expand its staff – we hope to reach a total staff count of 300 by year end – and infrastructure. In 2008 key projects will include:

- assisting the Member States and the Commission in implementing the new International Health Regulations;

- taking appropriate initiatives to help Member States raising awareness about antibiotic resistance and the need to use antibiotics wisely;

- planning the development of enhanced surveillance for several diseases including Hepatitis B and C;

- developing tools to make the detection of outbreaks throughout the region easier;

- developing a new multi-lingual web portal and offering access to key EU-wide surveillance data, disease facts and scientific advice.

I would like take the opportunity of this editorial to warmly thank all ECDC partners for the efficient work achieved side-by-side and the great support ECDC has been receiving during its development phase.

ECDC 2008 work programme presented to the Management Board

This month, Zsuzsanna Jakab will present ECDC's annual work programme for 2008 to the Management Board for approval. It is the result of an extensive planning process, including consultations with ECDC technical and administrative units and the Management Board, the Advisory Forum and the Commission. The 2008 work programme is based on the multi-annual strategic programme. Particular attention is given to matching objectives with available resources and ensuring continuity of the work from previous years.

ESCAIDE: experts from 40 countries meet in Stockholm

On 18–20 October 2007 around 500 leading experts from over 40 countries gathered at the European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology (ESCAIDE). Director Zsuzsanna Jakab stated: 'The first ever Europe-wide conference of its kind, ESCAIDE represents a unique opportunity for frontline professionals from national disease control institutes to engage with each other and the wider scientific community'.

ECDC, in partnership with the European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (EPIET) and the EPIET Alumni network (EAN) jointly organised this conference that brought together a wide variety of professionals. Participants included microbiologists, clinicians, public health professionals, environmental officers, veterinarians and more.

The conference agenda included sessions on: the emergence and spread of antibiotic resistance in Europe, including hospital bugs; the value of behavioural surveillance as a tool to prevent transmission of diseases such as HIV/AIDS; outbreaks and detection of avian influenza virus (H5N1); implications for Europe of the outbreak of chikungunya in Ravenna district, Italy. Feedback from participants was very positive, with 94% stating they would attend ESCAIDE in 2008.

As a side event, Panayotis Tassios, Assistant Professor of molecular micro-biology at the University of Athens and ECDC staff Johan Giesecke, Chief Scientist, Justin Denny, Expert and Jan Semenza, Senior Expert conducted a webcast debate on the theme 'Disease control in Europe – What's new?'

View the webcast at: <http://gaia.world-television.com/wtvs/2007/ecdc/stst/setup.asp?ticket=600-609-5711&target=en>

Simulation exercises:

testing and exploring emergency procedures

ECDC's philosophy is to 'plan, prepare and practise' its emergency procedures. Regular emergency simulation exercises help keep staff 'crisis ready' and help test the effectiveness of ECDC's plans and procedures. Lessons learned in these exercises are used to improve systems and identify gaps.

On 21 September 2007 ECDC executed a table-top simulation exercise to explore contact tracing procedures within the EU, based on a draft paper developed by a Health Security Committee working group. The scenario for exercise 'Red Wing' reported the case of a person diagnosed with Ebola virus who potentially infected other passengers travelling on an international flight. Besides ECDC staff members, representatives from DG SANCO C3, WHO EURO, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Belgium, the United Kingdom and France gathered in Stockholm to participate. Observers from Norway, Spain and Belgium were also present to assess it together with the evaluators. The immediate 'hot wash-up' identified steps in the process to be addressed. More detailed recommendations are currently under discussion.

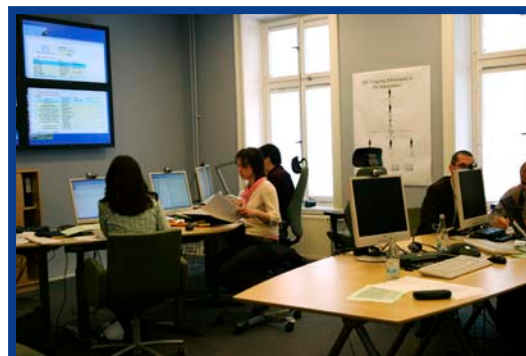
Executed in June 2007 'Brown Lagoon' was an internal command post exercise carried out in ECDC. It was designed to provide ECDC with an opportunity to review and practise internal procedures and systems and to test the Emergency Operation Centre's equipment and facilities. The scenario tested ECDC's ability to respond to two simultaneous public health events – a significant food-borne outbreak and a multi-country outbreak of diphtheria.

ECDC acknowledged the professionalism of the UK Health Protection Agency (HPA) team that helped with the conception, execution and evaluation of the exercises. In 2006 ECDC signed a three-year

framework contract with HPA for the development of simulation exercises. Further exercises are planned for 2008.



Initial meeting of the strategic team



Screening activities



Follow-up meeting of the strategic team



'Hot wash-up' evaluation



Jef Maes, Head of Administration, is assisted by Natalia Gorea, secretary. Elisabeth Robino, legal advisor also acts as deputy. A major current challenge is the set up of reporting tools and definition of indicators for a management system based on SAP software. Regular contact with and reporting to DG ADM/BUDG and Auditors are also key functions.



Other activities include (1) the provision of legal advice on issues such as legal implications of cooperation with Member States, interpretation of staff regulations and financial rules; (2) ensuring compliance with data protection requirements and rights of public access to documents and (3) coordination of the development of internal procedures, which is a first step towards the setting up of a quality management system. An internal auditor based in the unit acts independently.

IT services: letting ECDC run smoothly

The primary mission of Stefan Fassbender, coordinator, Gavin Reid, network and telecommunication and Dirk Bartelsen, helpdesk coordinator, is to support the key business objectives of the units and to enable the business by developing an IT infrastructure that can adapt and improve as ECDC grows. Many core missions of ECDC are directly based or dependent on IT systems. Currently there are more than 10 IT projects ongoing (TESSy, EWRS, web portal, etc). The importance of ICT can be illustrated by the fact that about 20–25% of ECDC's yearly budget is invested in this area.

Human resources: recruiting and taking care of ECDC staff

The HR team is coordinated by Margaretha Letterhag, in the absence of Jessica Sjöbom (on maternity leave). The team covers three main issues: (1) recruitment managed by

Joanna Glab and Jin Devreker, (2) personnel administration covered by Rositsa Radeva, Mary Christoforaki, Frauke Balks and Laurence Costa and (3) learning and development carried out by Ana Espinosa and Leila Sayyad. Virginia Biec is the financial assistant dealing with salaries and Åsa Hultman HR secretary. It means preparing and attending all interviews, welcoming newcomers every second week, liaising with Swedish authorities, keeping track of absences and implementing EC staff regulations as well as supporting ECDC staff on their personal development.

Finance: ensuring and controlling funds

The Finance group's mission is to ensure the availability of funds to permit ECDC to implement its work programme. Theodoros Orfanos, the group's coordinator, is ECDC's Accountant and acting budget officer. Richard Geidenstam and Lotta Wickström deal with accounts payable and budget initiation. Katalin Borbely and Beatrice Masoliver are procurement officers, liaising with the resource officers in the technical units to implement the procurement plan. The group is closely involved in the planning of activities; the implementation phase through the procurement programme and the accountancy phase making the necessary payments to ECDC suppliers and staff! The group also drafts monthly financial reports and ECDC's Annual Accounts which are available on the ECDC website.

Logistics: keeping comfortable premises

Under Torgny Malmgren's coordination, the logistic group aims at providing secure and comfortable premises for ECDC staff members. Running the premises includes dealing with external security and cleaning companies; monitoring water, electricity and heating supplies; dealing with safety issues such as implementing the evacuation and fire protection programme. The group also manages office supplies and all furniture, including the Emergency Operation Centre's assets. In order to accommodate ECDC's planned growth, a second building is currently being equipped.

Missions & Meetings: flying people in and out

In 2007, the group made arrangements for 127 meetings, 140 interviews involving external people and 560 missions by ECDC staff. Clemencia Widlund coordinates both Missions & Meetings aspects with (1) Eva Liljestedt, mission orders and travel arrangements, and Rezana Masha, mission claims and (2) Teresita Herrera-Viklund, meeting travel arrangements, and Irina Terentjeva, external people's reimbursement. Elmira Khazeeva supports the group. The group defines itself as the mission guidelines' guardian and kindly invites everyone to be aware of them to facilitate and speed the processing of their claims.

ECDC Director addresses European Parliament's ENVI Committee

On 8 October 2007 ECDC Director addressed the Parliament's Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee, presenting ECDC's accomplishments in 2007 and outlining its priorities for 2008.

Responding to questions by MEPs, Zsuzsanna Jakab updated them on ECDC's on-going external evaluation. On 5 October, ECDC's Executive Management Committee met a team from Ecorys, the firm in charge of the evaluation. Three issues were considered: evaluation of the ECDC mandate's fulfilment; assessment of ECDC's partnerships and review of ECDC's mandate. The Director sees the evaluation as an opportunity for a debate on ECDC's work and mandate. MEPs will be consulted during the review.

Concerning ECDC's effective support to the Member States, the pandemic preparedness came as a good example. ECDC reviewed Member States' preparedness, given recommendations and then reviewing their implementation. A similar approach is taken on AMR, probably one of ECDC's highest priorities for 2008. Finally the current under-development surveillance database, required by ECDC's Founding Regulation, will also be a very useful tool to pinpoint area for public health action. The review of the last 10 year's data in ECDC's epidemiological report indicates the growing trends which provide the evidence for public health action.

For more information: http://ecdc.europa.eu/Press/speeches/07_10_08_EUparl.html

Evaluation of European surveillance networks: ECDC meets one of the evaluation team

Jean-Claude Desenclos, Institut de Veille Sanitaire, France, Dora Navarro, University of Alicante, Spain and Lucia Pastore Celentano, former EPIET fellow, Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Italy and now ECDC's staff member have evaluated two European surveillance networks ESAC and EARSS. So far, 14 networks have been evaluated by 13 teams. The team tells us more about their experience.

How is an evaluation team set up?

As a rule, an evaluation team includes a senior epidemiologist as team leader, a laboratory expert and a junior epidemiologist. The team members are from national public health institutes or other national institutions.

Can you tell us more about what happens doing an evaluation?

Evaluating a network usually requires several months. In October 2006, we conducted the evaluation of ESAC and in April 2007, given our previous enjoyable experience, we carried out the evaluation of EARSS. The evaluation follows a standard procedure developed by ECDC's Surveillance Unit. The process aims at assessing both the hub's work and the network's relevance in the surveillance of the particular disease(s). Three phases characterise the evaluation process: a preparatory phase, the hub interview and the reporting phase. During the first phase, network members, epidemiologists, laboratory experts and state epidemiologists are asked to fill in standard questionnaires. ECDC provided us with compiled summaries of the questionnaires and documents attesting the network's activity, to use as our basis for the field work. The visit to the hub usually lasts two to three days and is spent mainly carrying out a standard interview and acquiring more information on the network activities. The reporting phase consists of preparing the evaluation and assessment



Dora Navarro, Jean-Claude Desenclos and Lucia Pastore Celentano

reports. The evaluation report, shared with both the hub and ECDC, focuses on the usefulness, technical performance and surveillance objectives of the network. The hub checks it and corrects factual errors. The assessment report, directly sent to ECDC, includes an analysis of the network's strengths and weaknesses and the relevance of network's activities for EU-level surveillance needs. At the end, it is ECDC's responsibility to decide what action to take based on the report.

How did you appreciate being a network's evaluator?

ESAC and EARSS hubs conducted a remarkable work during the process and therefore both evaluations went very well. If an evaluation might appear as an unfriendly incursion, it is still an occasion to learn more and improve the functioning of the network. At a professional level, evaluating a network is a unique opportunity to deepen your understanding of it. At a personal level, it is interesting and gratifying to work as a team with other European colleagues. In addition, the European perspective of the evaluation is of particular relevance at a time where surveillance of infectious diseases is formally coordinated at the EU level by ECDC. Our evaluations also contribute to the set up of the EU surveillance strategy on infectious diseases.

Country visit for HIV and STIs in Romania



At the Institute of Infectious Diseases Dr Matei Bals: Eduard Petrescu, Marianna Mardaescu, Adrian Streinu Cercel, Pedro Arias, Marita van de Laar, Tony Nardone and Ann Virkus.

On 11–15 June 2007, Marita van de Laar and Pedro Arias from ECDC, together with Anthony Nardone (EuroHIV, France) and Ann Virkus (National Institute for Health Development, Estonia) carried out a country visit to Romania. Its main purpose was to review the national programme with respect to HIV and STI activities. More specifically, the team intended to review, together with country experts, the status of HIV and STI surveillance, prevention and control in order to: (1) identify priority areas where ECDC – within its mandate – can provide support; (2) direct ECDC activities and propose actions for improvement; (3) enhance the knowledge of ECDC's HIV/STI team on the HIV/STI situation in the country; and (4) share country experiences. The team had interesting exchanges with Secretary of State Vlad Iliescu and colleagues from the Ministry of Public Health, Institute of Infectious Diseases Matei Bals, the University Hospital NG Lupu, the University Hospital of Infectious Diseases Victor Babes, the Reference Laboratory for STI at Cantacuzino Institute and warmly thanks all of them for their valuable input. Among other recommendations, the team encouraged their colleagues to use the outcomes of the visit to strengthen their national capacities on HIV and STIs.

The WHO European Ministerial Forum (EMF) 'All against tuberculosis' was attended by more than 330 delegates, 20 ministers and high-level decision-makers from 49 of 53 WHO European Member States along with representatives from other UN bodies, the Commission, international organisations and NGOs. Under the auspices of Germany's federal health minister Ulla Schmidt, ministers and leading figures in TB advocacy, control and funding (including Jorge Sampaio, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Stop TB) described the urgency of the TB situation in Europe.

The ECDC Director¹ presented the main challenges and eight action areas for TB control in the EU proposed as input to the EU Action Plan². Data from the EuroTB surveillance network was used to address two **misconceptions**; that TB is:

- a disease of minor significance within the EU. The low overall EU incidence (18/100 000) masks countries with moderate to high incidence/burden. Also even in low-incidence countries there is a high burden in some vulnerable groups.
- mainly an imported disease affecting populations of foreign origin. In 12 EU countries the percent-

age of TB cases of foreign origin is higher than 40%. However, overall in the EU it is only 19%, i.e. the bulk of the EU burden (>80%) is from the native population.

The said eight action areas were accordingly tailored to reflect the diversity and challenges described. In a special session, ministers and delegates adopted the Berlin declaration on TB.

1. ECDC was invited by WHO in 2006 to be a member of the Steering Committee for the EMF and also contributed to the process of drafting the Berlin Declaration. Besides being important for TB control in Europe in its own right, ECDC also saw the EMF as an important landmark for the Action Plan to fight TB in the EU.

2. In March 2007, Commissioner Kyriacou called for ECDC to develop an Action Plan to fight TB in the EU. Experts from ECDC and EuroTB developed a first draft which has been commented on by the Commission, ECDC Advisory Forum, EuroTB national correspondents and WHO. In 2007 a consultation with Member States, NGO and other relevant partners took place. The amended proposed action plan will go to Commissioner Kyriacou and be presented to the health ministers.

For more information: http://ecdc.europa.eu/documents/pdf/071022_EMF_Berlin_Slides.pdf

The Berlin declaration: <http://www.euro.who.int/Document/E90833.pdf>

Innovations in pandemic preparedness

Following the Fourth EC/ECDC/WHO European Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Workshop which took place in Luxembourg on 25–27 September, an article was produced summarising the main outcomes of the meeting. It focuses particularly on the session organised by ECDC on good practises and innovations and celebrates the work being done at Member State level to enhance pandemic preparedness. It gives an overview of the different films presented, which focused on increasing public awareness on the dangers of influenza and promotion of hygiene measures to avoid transmission, as well as preparedness planning. The article also gives an overview of the numerous posters presented, which reflected the innovative approaches of countries, regions and organisations in preparing for a possible pandemic. These covered areas such as communication, hospital preparedness, exercises, vaccination and antivirals, intersectoral issues and business continuity planning.

For more information: http://ecdc.europa.eu/Health_topics/Pandemic_Influenza/pdf/11_10_07_Pandemic_Workshop.pdf

Epiet fellows: different paths but always interesting ones!

Interested in working in the front line of disease control? Learn more about the path of an EPIET fellow and check the ECDC website for more details on the recruitment process after 20 December!

For more information: <http://www.epiet.org/index.html>

From Romania to the United Kingdom: strengthening public health in Europe

After 15 years of experience in the field of public health, Claudia Dima, a Medical Doctor, Public Health and Management specialist and PhD student at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest, decided to join the EPIET programme. This year, Claudia entered cohort 13 and soon after started to collaborate with colleagues from the Centre for Infections, Health Protection Agency, United Kingdom.

To Claudia, EPIET offered the possibility to develop her competencies in epidemiology. Also it was an opportunity to enhance her knowledge and skills on outbreak investigation, disease surveillance, applied research and communication. She particularly values EPIET's 'learning by doing' approach, its orientation to public health problems encountered in real life and the opportunity to exchange with colleagues and outstanding professionals from all

over Europe. She just regrets that, for a majority of fellows, EPIET is oriented towards a single major public health problem: infectious diseases. Approaching other major public health issues within the EPIET scope would have an enormous added value for the programme as well as for better health in Europe.

Claudia's advice to potential candidates would be to try to know more about the 'EPIET life' and enjoy it even before enrolling! It could be by contacting and questioning current fellows or alumni on the programme or attending conferences. To Claudia, EPIET is a remarkable resource of knowledge, experience and professional enhancement. Though it is too soon to plan for 'after' EPIET, Claudia sees herself carrying on working in a public health field that suits her competencies. She would enjoy working more on surveillance activities where her



Alexandra Constantinescu, Dragos Constantin Radasan, Adrian Stoica and Claudia Dima working during the course of Communicable Diseases for Policy Officials and Senior Experts

inputs can lead to improvements in public health.

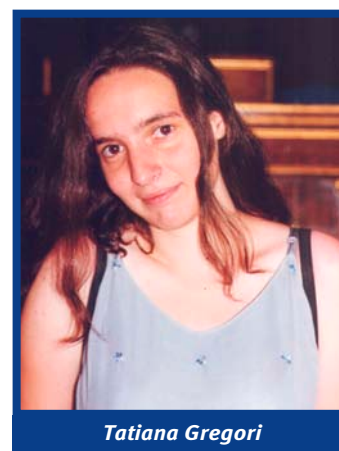
In the name of cohort 13, Claudia expresses her profound sadness at the recent loss of Tatiana Grigori, her bright EPIET colleague. Her compassion goes to her family and dearest friends. May ECDC and EPIET fellows' activities as public health professionals contribute to public health strengthening to prevent the early loss of human lives.

Tatiana Grigori, an EPIET fellow of cohort 13, died suddenly on Thursday 18 October 2007, at the age of 31, during the European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology in Stockholm.

Tatiana was born and grew up in Athens. She graduated from the Medical School of the Athens University in 2002. For about 1½ years she worked as a physician at the General Hospital and the Mental Health Hospital on the island of Leros. She attended MSc courses in public health at the National School of Public Health in Athens (2004–05) and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

(2006–07) obtaining degrees from both. This year she was selected to participate in the European Programme of Intervention Epidemiology (EPIET), attended the 2007 introductory course in Minorca and was about to start her training and work at the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre, NHPS for Wales, Cardiff.

From the time she was a medical student, Tatiana had a keen interest in public health and preventive medicine; domestic violence as well as infectious diseases. She was an enthusiastic and hard working scientist with a critical and imaginative way of thinking, and a unique team spirit.



Tatiana Gregori

Those of us who knew her will remember Tatiana with affection, esteem and respect.

Colleagues from around the world

Upcoming publications

For more information: publications@ecdc.europa.eu

Chikungunya in Italy: Joint ECDC/WHO visit for a European risk assessment

Following an outbreak of chikungunya fever in north-eastern Italy in August 2007, ECDC and WHO undertook a joint visit to the region in order to prepare a European Risk Assessment. The outbreak is the first documented local vector-borne transmission of the chikungunya virus in Europe. The chikungunya virus was detected in local 'tiger' mosquitoes (*Aedes albopictus*), which are considered to be responsible for transmitting the infection. The mission report is now available and provides an assessment of the risk of establishment and spread of virus transmission in the EU.

Report of infectious disease and environmental change workshop

The report explains and lays out the potential impact of climate change on infectious diseases. It also predicts which pre-existing infectious diseases are most likely to spread in scope and deepen in intensity as a result of climate change. The report describes actions that can be taken by public health organisations to prevent the spread of the newly potent infectious diseases. It closes with recommendations on policy options. Due for publication early 2008.

Infectious diseases and social determinants

The report lays out social determinants of communicable diseases and addresses disease-specific issues. Among the social determinants of communicable diseases is a specific population's education level and knowledge about how diseases spread. Specific diseases addressed include HIV/AIDS and vaccine-preventable diseases. The intervention strategies outlined for overcoming social inequalities include decreasing social stratification and lessening the vulnerability of disadvantaged people. Prior actions identified by the report include health monitoring and new insights into prior disease research. Due for publication early 2008.

First meeting of the TESSy working group

In the interest of developing an EU-wide disease surveillance system, a working group was convened in 2006. Work has continued on the project this year and this report outlines the progress made thus far on developing the TESSy disease surveillance system. It included the timeline and framework for implementing the system and the planning for the transitional phase when ECDC and Dedicated Surveillance Networks (DSN) both collect data. Due for publication early 2008.

Eurosurveillance: first Editorial Board meeting at ECDC

The first annual *Eurosurveillance* meeting since the journal came under the wings of ECDC took place in Stockholm on 16–17 October 2007. The editorial team, editorial board and associate editors spent the two days discussing several aspects of the journal's future development. Topics discussed included an update of the editorial policy, the editorial independence of the journal, strategies for improving its scientific impact and future cooperation.

Upcoming events...

4-5.12.2007

Meeting on case definitions, Luxembourg

5-6.12.2007

Meeting of Epidemic Intelligence & Mass gathering management in the EU, Stockholm, ECDC

13-14.12.2007

Management Board meeting, Stockholm, ECDC

21-22.01.2008

Expert meeting on HIV testing, Stockholm, ECDC

4-5.02.2008

Meeting of Chairs of National Vaccine Committees, Stockholm, ECDC

13.03.2008

4th AMR meeting with National Focal Points, Slovenia

14.03.2008

Joint meeting of Chief Medical Officers and Antimicrobial Resistance Focal Points, Slovenia

19-20.02.2008

Advisory Forum meeting, Stockholm, ECDC

March 2008

Management Board meeting, Stockholm, ECDC (*to be confirmed*)

April 2008

Meeting of Heads of Communication from National Competent Bodies, Stockholm, ECDC

6-7.05.2008

Advisory Forum meeting, Stockholm, ECDC

June 2008

Management Board meeting, (*to be confirmed*)

23-24.09.2008

Advisory Forum meeting, Stockholm, ECDC

9-10.12.2008

Advisory Forum meeting, Stockholm, ECDC

November 2008

Management Board meeting, Stockholm, ECDC (*to be confirmed*)

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