WHO Report to RASSC41

41st Meeting of the Radiation Safety Standards Committee (RASSC), Vienna, Austria, 21-23 November 2016
Reported period: June 2016 to November 2016

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The World Health Organization (WHO) is the coordinating authority for global public health work within the United Nations system. More than 7000 WHO staff members work at its 150 WHO country offices, six regional offices and headquarters in Geneva. Its governing body is the World Health Assembly (WHA), made up of delegates from the 194 WHO Member States. WHO has a radiation programme within the Department of Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health (HQ FWC/PHE). For more information see WHO website1.

UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES RELEVANT FOR RASSC

Radon and NORM exposures
WHO is working to support its Member States for the implementation of international standards for radiation protection in existing exposure situations. WHO is coordinating the RADON listserv, a platform for sharing information which, since its creation, has been continuously expanding. To date, participants from over 50 countries have enlisted to join the discussion group and to post relevant and timely information about radon-related health research, resources, legislation, policies and upcoming meetings. WHO co-sponsored the Eight International Symposium on Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM VIII, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, October 2016). WHO is cooperating with the IAEA and FAO for the dissemination of the TECDOC 1788 and, in this context, contributed to the IAEA Regional Workshop to update national action plans to control public exposures in Asian and Pacific countries organized (Jakarta, Indonesia, August 2016). WHO Water & Sanitation programme is working on the development of guidance on radiological aspects of the WHO GDWQ and convened an expert meeting on that topic (Amman, Jordan, July 2016).

Medical exposure
WHO is supporting the implementation of the Bonn Call for Action under the framework of its Global Initiative on Radiation Safety in Health Care Settings2. WHO organized a session on radiation risk communication in paediatric imaging during the 8th International Conference on Children's health and the Environment (INCHES, Barcelona, Spain, September 2016) and contributed to two sessions on safety and quality in radiology during the 29th International Congress of Radiology (ICR, Buenos Aires, September 2016). WHO organized an International Workshop on Justification of the Use of CT in Asymptomatic People for Individual Health Assessment, hosted by the Korean Society of Radiology, in cooperation with the Korean National Evidence-based Healthcare Collaboration Agency (Seoul, Korea, September 2016). WHO was represented at a meeting of the HERCA WG on medical applications (Berne, Switzerland, September 2016) and the Multi-stakeholder HERCA Meeting on generic justification (Paris, France, October 2016). WHO participated in the 1st meeting of the Programme Committee for the International Conference on RP in Medicine organized by the IAEA (Vienna, Austria, October 2016). WHO, in cooperation with PAHO, IAEA, IRPA,

1 More information at http://www.who.int/about/en/
ICRP and FORO, organized the Iberoamerican Conference on Radiation Protection in Medicine (CIPRaM), hosted by the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality of Spain and the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council (Madrid, Spain, October 2016). WHO organized an African Regional Workshop on RSC(HC) focused on paediatric radiology as part of a joint IRPA-WHO-IOMP project on Radiation Safety Culture in Health Care Medicine (RSC(HC)) held in collaboration with the IAEA, in cooperation with the World Federation of Paediatric Imaging, the International Society of Radiographers and Radiological Technologists, the African Society of Paediatric the South African Society of Paediatric Imaging, the Society of Radiographers of South Africa, and hosted by the Radiological Society of South Africa (Stellenbosch, South Africa, November 2016). WHO, in cooperation with WONCA, ISR and IAEA, organized a workshop on justification of medical imaging during the 21st World Conference of Family Medicine (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, November 2016).

Emergency Preparedness and Response
WHO continues working to support the implementation of the International Health Regulations (IHR-2005) and strengthen national capacities for radiation emergency preparedness and response (EPR) in its member states. Information about WHO EPR-related work is periodically summarized at the REMPAN e-Newsletters. WHO published the proceedings of the 14th REMPAN meeting and is currently organizing the 15th REMPAN meeting, to be held at its headquarters (Geneva, Switzerland, 4-7 July 2017). Under the framework of the IHR-2005 and within the Global Health Security Agenda, WHO works with health authorities of its member states on assessments of national preparedness and response capacities through the mechanism of Joint Expert Evaluation tool (JEE1). This work and other relevant activities were reported by the WHO to the 2nd EPReSC meeting in July 2016. In addition, WHO participated at a meeting of the HERCA WG on emergencies (Helsinki, Finland, Sept 2016), where the ongoing work on the development of WHO recommendations on iodine thyroid blocking was reported. As a member of IACRNE, WHO took part at the 2nd meeting of the WG for planning the ConvEx(3)2017 (Székesfehérvár, Hungary, October 2016). EPR-related activities conducted by the WHO Radiation Program and its two global expert networks - i.e. REMPAN and BioDoseNet - will be reported by WHO during the next EPReSC meeting (Vienna, Austria, November 2016).

Inter-Agency Cooperation
WHO was represented at the 63rd UNSCEAR Session (Vienna, Austria, June 2016) and participated in the European Radiation Protection Week (Oxford, UK, September 2016). WHO is represented at this 41st RASSC meeting and looks forward to continuing its cooperation with the IAEA on the development and implementation of radiation safety standards worldwide.

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3 Conference website http://cipram-madrid-2016.es/
4 More information about the project http://www.who.int/ionizing_radiation/medical_radiation_exposure/culture/en/
6 14th REMPAN Proceedings published in the special issue of Radiation Protection Dosimetry 171 (1) 2016