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 website.

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-organized with the IAEA a workshop on QA/QC in the Measurement of Radon and on Radon Risk Communication. The meeting was successfully attended by European participants and hosted by the Institute of Occupational Safety and Environmental Health of Rigas Stradins University, in Riga, Latvia on 5-9 December 2016. WHO is an observer on the new European Commission Article 31 Working Party on exposure to natural sources of ionising radiations (WP NAT), and participated in the first meeting in Luxembourg on 21-22 March 2017. WHO cooperated with the IAEA, PAHO and FAO for the joint organization of a regional workshop on Radioactivity in Food, Drinking Water and Commodities: Implementing the International BSS for Latin American and Caribbean countries, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 21-23 March 2017. WHO Water & Sanitation programme is finalizing guidance materials (Q&As, case studies) on radiological aspects of the WHO GDWQ.

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 Settings. WHO has cooperated with the IAEA for the Regional Workshop on Appropriate Use of Radiation Imaging in Asia and the Pacific countries, (Kathmandu, Nepal, 5-9 December 2017). WHO was represented at an EC Workshop on the BSS Transposition in the Medical Sector (Brussels, Belgium, January 2017). WHO published the paper “Justification of the Use of CT in Asymptomatic People for Individual Health Assessment” (December 2016, available at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5357768/). WHO published the proceedings of the Iberoamerican Conference on Radiation Protection in Medicine (CIPRaM) as a special issue of the journal

1 More information at http://www.who.int/about/en/
RADIOPROTECCION (January 2016; available at https://www.sepr.es/recursos/revista/RP87/). WHO organized a Regional Workshop on Radiation Safety Culture in Health Care (RSCHC) for Middle East countries as part of a joint IRPA-WHO-IOMP project on RSCHC (Doha, Qatar, 6-7 February 2017). WHO has contributed to an IAEA meeting on Implementation of Imaging Referral Guidelines in Africa (Cairo, Egypt, February 2017), to Eurosafe sessions at the European Congress of Radiology (Vienna, Austria, 4-6 March 2017), to the IAEA Technical Meeting on Preventing Unintended and Accidental Medical Exposures in Radiology (Vienna, Austria, 7-9 March 2017), and to AfroSafe sessions during the African Congress of Radiology (Hammamet, Tunisia, 1-4 April 2017). WHO was represented at a meeting of the HERCA WG on medical applications (Budapest, Hungary, 30 March 2017). WHO cooperated with the IAEA and the National Institute on Radiological Protection (NIRP)/Chinese CDC for the organization of a training course on Radiation Protection and Safety in the Medical Uses of Ionizing Radiation—Implementing the International BSS (Xi’an, China, 15-18 May 2017). A coordination meeting of WHO Collaborating Centers on RP in medicine was held (Coimbra, Portugal, 27-28 April 2017). WHO is co-sponsoring the International Conference on Radiation Protection in Medicine to be held in Vienna in December 2017 organized by the IAEA, and in this capacity has contributed to the Programme Committee for the development of the scientific programme and identification of speakers. The 3rd WHO Global Forum on Medical Devices (GFMD) was held with about 700 registered participants from 86 countries (Geneva, Switzerland, 10-12 May 2017). A workshop on BSS implementation was organized during this GFMD. Moreover, issues related with radiological medical devices were discussed at 5 other workshops, this topic was addressed during 2 Plenary Sessions (i.e. “Human Resources for Medical Devices” and “Priority Medical Devices for Cancer Care and Other Non-Communicable Diseases”) and 4 Parallel Sessions on: (i) Human Resources and Medical Devices, (ii) Assessment of Medical Devices and HTA, (iii) Quality and Safety of Medical Devices and (iv) Radiation for Diagnosis and Treatment. WHO is developing information materials to support benefit-risk dialogue in paediatric imaging and organized in collaboration with the European Society of Paediatric Radiology (ESPR) a session on radiation risk communication in paediatric imaging to be held during the 53rd Annual Meeting of the ESPR (Davos, Switzerland, 1-3 June 2017).

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 Radiation Emergency Medical Preparedness and Assistance Network (REMPAN) e-Newsletters3. WHO is preparing the 15th Coordination meeting of REMPAN network, to be held on 3 to 5 July 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland. 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 (JEE4). This work and other relevant activities were reported by the WHO to the 3rd 4 EPReSC meeting in Nov 2016.

WHO continued working on the development of WHO recommendations on iodine thyroid blocking. As a member of IACRNE, WHO participated at the 3rd planning meeting of the ConvEx(3)2017 (Paks, Hungary, February 2017). In addition WHO participated in:

- NEA’s WPNEM meeting (Paris, France, January 2017)
- SHAMISEN project meeting (Paris, France, March 2017)
- NEA’s CRPPH meeting (Paris, France, March 2017)
- EAN and NERIS workshops (Lisbon, Portugal, May 2017)

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In more detail, the EPR-related activities conducted by the WHO Radiation Program and its two global expert networks- i.e. REMPAN\(^5\) and BioDoseNet\(^6\) - will be reported by WHO during the next EPReSC meeting (Vienna, Austria, June 6 to 8, 2017).

**Other relevant activities**

WHO was represented at the ICRP Meeting with Liaison Organizations (Vienna, Austria, November 2016). WHO contributed to the IAEA Technical Meeting on the Implementation of the Requirements of the International BSS in Relation to Non-Medical Human Imaging (Vienna, Austria, January 2016) and looks forward to continuing its cooperation with the IAEA on the development and implementation of radiation safety standards worldwide.


\(^6\) [http://www.who.int/ionizing_radiation/a_e/biodosenet/en/](http://www.who.int/ionizing_radiation/a_e/biodosenet/en/)