

Current major event

Second EMARIS Scientific Conference in Morocco 2019

The WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta (US-CDC) and the Oman Medical Journal (OMJ), is launching the Second Scientific Conference on Acute Respiratory Infections in parallel with the Fifth meeting of the EMARIS network.

Editorial note

Over the past years, influenza and other respiratory disease surveillance in the Eastern Mediterranean Region has made impressive progress. 19 out of the 22 countries are currently implementing SARI and ILI sentinel surveillance with enhanced data collection and analysis, as well as increasing laboratory diagnostic capacity for influenza viruses. Supporting this work is the Eastern Mediterranean Acute Respiratory Infection Surveillance (EMARIS), a network of countries in the Region working together to strengthen and enhance epidemiological and virological influenza surveillance, improve the use of surveillance data for developing prevention and control programmes, and for conducting research related to influenza and other respiratory viruses.

EMARIS network meetings are held biennially since 2011 to share best practices for epidemiological and virological influenza surveillance, track progress and draw important lessons on public health preparedness for pandemic influenza. The meetings have been supplemented with scientific conferences to promote research and innovation. The First Scientific Conference was held in December 2017 in Amman, Jordan, under the theme: “*Better Understanding, Better Preparedness, Better Response*”. It attracted over 140 attendees with 38 oral and poster abstract presentations. Country representatives and experts exchanged experiences, especially regarding virological surveillance, surveillance data for influenza burden of disease estimation, severity assessment and outbreak detection. Additionally, conference participants discussed vaccine uptake challenges, discussed the increasing global threat of avian influenza to human and animal health, and the value of the One Health approach for addressing the threat of novel influenza strains and other zoonotic emerging infectious diseases.

The Second Scientific Conference, taking place in Marrakesh, Morocco from 12 to



Thematic Areas of 2019 Conference

- Respiratory disease surveillance and laboratory capacity
- Influenza disease burden
- Outbreak investigations and response
- MERS-CoV and other re-emerging respiratory infections
- Influenza vaccination
- Pandemic preparedness and response
- Influenza at the human-animal interface
- Biosafety and security

15 November 2019, will capitalize on this success and expand it further. With the theme “*Better Data, Better Policy, Better Action*” (thematic areas in the box above), the Second Conference covers more respiratory infections and current hot topics such as biosafety and security. The Conference aims to attract more than 300 attendees and 50 scientific abstracts.

For young researchers, the conference provides a platform for presenting their findings, pursuing publication in a peer-reviewed journal, connecting with their peers, fostering further scientific collaboration and cooperation, and getting up-to-date with the latest evidence, trends in the field, and remaining knowledge gaps to be addressed. Skill-building and knowledge-sharing workshops will offer participants the opportunity to further build their research capacities.

The abstract submission process has opened on emariskonference.com, welcoming aspiring participants to submit abstracts for oral and/or poster presentations, which will be vetted by a committee of expert reviewers.

Subscribe to the latest EMARIS conference e-mail updates [here](#) and follow along on Twitter under [#EMARISconf2019](#).

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

MERS in Saudi Arabia; **MERS** in Oman; **cholera** in Somalia; **cholera** in Yemen; **Multidrug-resistant typhoid fever** in Pakistan.

Current public health events of concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

Avian influenza: 2006-2017

Egypt (A/H5N1) [359 (122), 33.98%]

Egypt (A/H9N2) [4 (0)]

Ebola virus disease (EVD): 2018-2019

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) [1 439 (930), 64.62%]

Cholera: 2017-2019

Somalia [7 140 (46), 0.64%]

Yemen [1 672 343 (3 304), 0.19%]

Diphtheria: 2018-2019

Yemen [3 524 (203), 5.76%]

Bangladesh [8 580 (45), 0.52%]

MERS: 2012-2019

Saudi Arabia [2 037 (760), 37.30%]

Oman [24 (7), 29.16%]

Multidrug-resistant typhoid fever: 2016-2019

Pakistan [6 999 (0)]