

Summary report on the

**Meeting of experts on the
standardized IMCI pre-service
education package**

Teheran, Islamic Republic of Iran
26 July–1 August 2008



**World Health
Organization**

Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean

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1. INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO) held a meeting of experts on the standardized IMCI pre-service education package in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, from 26 July to 1 August 2008.

The main purpose of the meeting was to review a set of draft materials developed by the Regional Office to guide the introduction of the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) into the teaching programmes of medical schools, helping to standardize teaching methodology and providing a set of instruments to support the teaching process, including its evaluation. This package was the first of its kind to be developed by WHO in child health globally. The specific objectives of the meeting were to:

- review the draft materials;
- develop a plan for their finalization; and
- identify further needs and make recommendations on future work in this area.

The meeting convened 19 people from six countries in the Region. Participants included 10 senior academic staff of paediatrics departments of eight medical schools, three national IMCI coordinators from ministries of health and six WHO staff from headquarters, regional and country levels. Participants were selected on the basis of familiarity with IMCI, previous exposure to IMCI pre-service education and involvement in IMCI teaching.

As highlighted in the opening message of Dr Hussein Gezairy, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean the development of this package had been strongly recommended by academic staff and child public health managers in the Second Regional Consultation on IMCI Pre-service Education, held in Cairo in August 2006, as an

indispensable tool to assist old and new schools in introducing, implementing and assessing teaching programmes including IMCI.

The package includes a facilitator guide to conduct in-depth orientation and planning workshops for teaching institutions, teaching sessions with procedures and student learning objectives, a guide on evaluation, a multiple-choice questions bank and electronic tools to support teaching and student learning. It is envisioned that the package will be instrumental in helping to build capacity to improve paediatric and community and family medicine outpatient teaching. This work will support countries in their efforts to improve child health and achieve the Millennium Development Goal no. 4 on under-five mortality reduction.

2. CONCLUSIONS

Working in plenary sessions and small working groups, participants reviewed the draft materials of the package, proposing revisions as needed. A plan of action to finalize the package was developed. The session on conclusions and recommendations was chaired by the Director, Division of Health Protection and Promotion, WHO/EMRO.

The participants:

- reaffirmed the importance of IMCI pre-service education to accelerate the development of human resources for the achievement of MDG4;
- acknowledged the benefits of IMCI pre-service education in strengthening outpatient teaching in medical and paramedical schools and ensuring future IMCI sustainability in countries;
- confirmed the value of the package of IMCI pre-service education materials developed under the leadership of WHO/EMRO;
- noted that WHO efforts on IMCI pre-service education had to date concentrated on paediatric teaching and more work was needed to

support teaching in community medicine and public health departments;

- noted that in the area of child health, care of the sick young infant—especially during the neonatal period—was increasingly recognized as a major issue by countries in the Region and that demand for support was rising;
- congratulated WHO/EMRO on its efforts and valuable guidance to promote and support implementation and evaluation of IMCI pre-service education in a standardized way in diverse teaching environments;
- appreciated the potential and broader use of the tools beyond IMCI;
- noted the need to promote the strengthening of skills on effective teaching in institutions engaged in IMCI pre-service education.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Regional Office

1. Continue to develop the necessary tools and provide technical support to scale up IMCI pre-service education as an essential approach to improve child health in a sustainable way.
2. Establish an e-mail discussion group for the expert group to facilitate the review, feedback and communication to finalize the package.
3. Expedite the process of revising, field-testing, finalizing and reproducing the elements of the package reviewed at the meeting.
4. Build regional and national capacity in the use of the different elements of the IMCI pre-serve education package.

5. Collaborate with community and family medicine departments of teaching institutions to develop standard approaches and materials for the inclusion of IMCI also in community and family medicine and public health teaching programmes.
6. Provide the required technical support to improve the way the young infant age group is addressed in IMCI pre-service education.
7. Act as both a catalyst and as a contributor for the strengthening of effective teaching skills in universities engaged in IMCI pre-service education by promoting the use of existing materials (modified as needed), fostering partnerships and linking with ongoing accreditation processes and other mechanisms that can make this effort successful.
8. Report back to the expert group within 2 years on the progress of utilization of this package.