

Current major event

First EMARIS Conference and Fourth Meeting in Jordan

WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean will hold the First Scientific Conference on Acute Respiratory Infections (ARIs) in the Eastern Mediterranean Region together with the Fourth Meeting of the Eastern Mediterranean Acute Respiratory Infection Surveillance (EMARIS) Network in Amman, Jordan during the period from 11 to 14 December 2017. This conference is the result of a continuous collaboration effort between WHO, the centers for diseases control and prevention in Atlanta (US-CDC) and the Global Health Development (GHD) in Amman, Jordan.

Editorial note

The main objective of the First Scientific Conference on acute Respiratory Infections in the Eastern Mediterranean Region is to share up-to-date scientific information and research findings on disease surveillance, disease burden, aetiology, prevention (vaccination), preparedness, response, and networks on ARIs at national and regional levels. Moreover, the conference aims to encourage junior public health professionals in the Region to improve their research skills.

53 participants have been nominated by 20 out of 22 countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region of WHO to participate in the conference. A total of 91 abstracts were submitted and examined by 18 highly qualified reviewers with predetermined inclusion criteria. Out of those abstracts, 38 were accepted and selected to be presented as oral and/or poster presentations. 1 keynote speaker, 30 speakers and 10 panellists will be presenting their work to more than 130 attendees and a group of 7 expert judges (*Please see table*). Awards will be given to the best oral abstract and best poster presentation.

The theme of the conference is: 'Better Understanding, Better Preparedness, and Better Response'. Thus, the four-day conference/meeting will cover four major thematic areas: epidemiological surveillance, influenza at the human-animal interface, vaccination and virological surveillance. These areas will be delivered throughout seven main sessions: (1) Influenza surveillance in the 21st century: lessons from the past and vision for the



Fourth Meeting of the Eastern Mediterranean Acute Respiratory Infection Surveillance (EMARIS) Network

Number of Participants per Conference Element in EMARIS 11-14 Dec

| Conference Element | Number of Participants |
|--|------------------------|
| Country nominees | 53 |
| Countries participating | 20/22 |
| Abstracts submitted | 91 |
| Abstract reviewers | 18 |
| Abstracts accepted | 38 |
| Abstracts accepted as oral presentations | 24 |
| Abstracts accepted as poster presentations | 14 |
| Attendees expected | 130-140 |
| Keynote speaker | 1 |
| Speakers | 30 |
| Panelists | 10 |
| Expert judges | 7 |

future, (2) Epidemiological surveillance and use of surveillance data for informed policy and practice, (3) Virological surveillance for influenza: enhancing better understanding on influenza epidemiology and better preparedness, (4) Use of influenza vaccine in Eastern Mediterranean Region: challenges for increased uptake, (5) Influenza surveillance at the human-animal interface: better data collection for better response, (6) Surveillance for Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV): lessons learned from SARI surveillance network/platform, and (7) Addressing pandemic influenza threats: recognition, prevention and response.

The conference news feed and information will be updated regularly during the 4 days on a Facebook page and Twitter hash tag created specifically for EMARIS Conference. This will include live interviews with key note speaker and other speakers, panelists and judges.

Update on outbreaks

MERS in Saudi Arabia; **cholera** in Somalia; **cholera** in Yemen; **dengue** in Pakistan.

Current public health events of international concern [cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

Avian influenza: 2006-2017

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Egypt (A/H5N1) | [359 (122), 34%] |
| Egypt (A/H9N2) | [4 (0)] |

Avian influenza A (H7N9): 2013-2017

| | |
|-------|----------------------|
| China | [1,564 (612), 39.1%] |
|-------|----------------------|

Chikungunya: 2016-2017

| | |
|----------|-------------|
| Pakistan | [8,282 (0)] |
|----------|-------------|

Cholera: 2016-2017

| | |
|---------|--------------------------|
| Somalia | [78,349 (1,159), 1.5%] |
| Yemen | [959,810 (2,219), 0.23%] |

Plague: 2017

| | |
|------------|-------------------|
| Madagascar | [2,384 (207), 9%] |
|------------|-------------------|

Dengue fever: 2017

| | |
|----------|----------------------|
| Pakistan | [125,316 (69), 0.1%] |
|----------|----------------------|

MERS: 2012-2017

| | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Saudi Arabia | [1,747 (681), 39%] |
|--------------|--------------------|

Wild poliovirus: 2014-2017

| | |
|-------------|----------|
| Pakistan | [5 (0)] |
| Afghanistan | [11 (0)] |

Zika virus infection: 2015-2017

84 countries and territories have reported transmission so far.