

Public health emergencies: preparedness and response

The First Global Model WHO World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolutions WHA 59.22 on preparedness and emergency response and WHA 73.1 on the COVID-19 response which called for a review of the functioning of the International Health Regulations (2005);

Recalling also WHO Members States' commitment to achieve target 3.d. of the Sustainable Development Goals;

Having considered the sacrifices and dedication of all health professionals and workers, that have been going beyond their call of duty in responding to health emergencies, including the Covid-19 pandemic;

Taking into consideration the 10 WHO proposals to build a safer world together, which are based on the principles of equity, inclusivity and coherence;

Noting with appreciation the initiatives taken by the World Health Organization concerning preparedness and response in public health emergencies including pandemics, natural disasters, and bioterrorism;

Highlighting the role of WHO in providing universal, equitable and affordable access to all health services especially in developing countries, shown in an exemplary way with the launch of the Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) 2030 Strategy in order to ensure resilience and WHA 64.3 on the importance of developing health facilities with resources and preparedness programs in response to internal and external public health emergencies with specific emphasis on leadership and governance, human resources, equity, systems and tools and finance, information and research, service delivery and medicines and technologies;

Acknowledging the disproportionate impacts of public health emergencies on vulnerable populations across and within countries with the need for comprehensive and effective preparedness and response to mitigate the consequences of such emergencies, by taking note of the observations and key messages of the report of the review committee;

Bearing in mind the principle-based governance mechanisms and principle-based approach to the use of data for international health emergencies, which underlines the importance of collective action and collaborative policymaking by relevant stakeholders for the reduction of disinformation and misinformation, as well as the increase of public awareness and responsiveness to public health emergencies and resolution WHA 74.7 on the development and implementation of

national response plans to health emergencies to provide accurate, timely and evidence-based information;

Conscious of the increasing relevance of international cooperation and therefore, appreciating the work done by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body and nongovernmental organizations;

Recognizing the WHO Health Emergencies Programme Learning Strategy which focuses on how to create highly effective and efficient workforce for health emergency work;

Affirming that the right to the highest attainable status in health is an inalienable human right, and an inherent part of human dignity,

1. URGES Member States:

- (1) to develop international unified risk communication strategies such as risk assessment, prediction and warning systems, surge capacity planning, and effective communication strategies to increase public awareness regarding the epidemiology of different public health emergencies prior to their onset;
- (2) to allocate sufficient resources effectively whereby Member States contribute to enabling the movement of resources, including funding, especially front line health care workers, in order to increase the readiness of public health systems with political commitment in respect of the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach;
- (3) to increase their commitment in ensuring sustainability, abundance, accessibility, equitable distribution of medical resources for prevention and treatment, through research and development, strengthening manufacturing capacities and sustainable use;
- (4) to strengthen domestic medical supervision, control, and information dissemination mechanisms, making them robust and resilient to ensure the normal operation of public health undertakings;
- (5) to devise generic, hazard-specific action plans as a coordinated and unified process for emergency preparedness through international cooperation along with practice routines in organizations by mobilizing local health workforce to increase the resilience of health systems concerning an effective, immediate response to public health emergencies;
- (6) to design a sustainable financing mechanism including a contingency funding plan in the health system for public health emergency through collaborative efforts;

- (7) to promote community engagement especially with youth and vulnerable groups by means of education and information dissemination to increase awareness on preparedness of and response to public health emergencies;
- (8) to address obstacles that prevented effective functioning of health systems and identify feasible and effective measures that can be taken in order to strengthen these health systems for better prevention preparedness and response;
- (9) to develop the evidence base for the management of public health emergencies involving operational research and the assessment of financials;
- (10) to adopt a One Health approach related to prevention, surveillance and response of public health emergencies;
- (11) to establish a financial intermediation fund and increase transparency, flexibility and accountability to ensure that all countries meet their obligations to strengthen the global health system;

2. CALLS UPON international organizations and other relevant stakeholders, including intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations sovereign governments, private sector companies, and academic institutions:

- (1) to develop international unified risk communication strategies such as risk assessment, prediction and warning systems, surge capacity planning, and effective communication strategies to increase public awareness regarding the epidemiology of different public health emergencies prior to their onset;
- (2) to assist in the allocation and dissemination of resources, medical supplies, and economic support, to ensure the readiness of public health systems, especially in aiding the most vulnerable populations;
- (3) to support disaster-risk reduction for various sectors impacted during public health emergencies following the guidance of the International Health Regulation (2005) by strengthening collaboration and ensuring coherence and complementarity of actions of relevant entities, including public, private, nongovernmental, and academic ones;
- (4) to continue the commitment to ensure abundance, accessibility, and equitable distribution of all sorts of resources including knowledge and technology, as well as manufacturing capacities of prevention and treatment tools to strengthen and encourage the acceleration of sustainable research and development;

- (5) to mainstream generic, hazard-specific action plans as a coordinated and unified process for emergency preparedness through international cooperation along with practice routines in organizations by mobilizing local health workforce to increase the resilience of health systems concerning an effective, immediate response to public health threats;
- (6) to ensure the proper enactment and maintain accountability and transparency of the proposed financial systems imposed by Member States;
- (7) to foster community engagement in various organizations especially those for youth and vulnerable groups through non-formal and formal education to increase awareness on the preparedness of and response to public health emergencies;
- (8) to evaluate obstacles that prevented effective functioning of health systems and identify possible measures that can be taken in order to strengthen these health systems for better prevention, preparedness and response;
- (9) to strengthen comprehensive medical supervision, control, and information dissemination mechanisms, making them robust and resilient to ensure the normal operation of public health undertakings and engage relevant partners and community to cooperate to address emergencies;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to strengthen the cooperation with international organizations to improve the prevention, early investigation and mitigation of health emergencies at all scales and develop a comprehensive risk communication plan through emergency meetings of the World Health Organization's Executive Board;
- (2) to optimize the functions of the organizational structure and mechanisms of WHO including the tools used in COVID-19 such as the access to COVID-19 tools accelerator for addressing resource and accountability gaps of global institutions in responding to public health emergencies;
- (3) to strengthen efforts in coordinating the supply chain of essential medical and human resources for surveillance, diagnosis, treatment and strong immunity in public health emergencies;
- (4) to support the development, integration, and implementation of effective disease surveillance systems to facilitate the acceleration of Member States' rapid response based on the early warning signs of public health emergency hazards;

- (5) to ensure the rapid deployment of a WHO team for prevention and response.

DISCLAIMER

These resolutions have been drafted by the Youth Delegates during the first Global Model WHO held from 10-19 February 2023. Any information or suggested actions contained in resolutions drafted by student delegates participating in the 2023 Global Model WHO do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the World Health Organization.