

EB120.R7 Avian and pandemic influenza: developments, response and follow-up, application of the International Health Regulations (2005), and best practice for sharing influenza viruses and sequence data

The Executive Board,

Having considered the reports on avian and pandemic influenza: developments, response and follow-up, application of the International Health Regulations (2005), and best practice for sharing influenza viruses and sequence data,¹

RECOMMENDS to the Sixtieth World Health Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:²

The Sixtieth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on avian and pandemic influenza: developments, response and follow-up;

Recalling resolutions WHA58.5 and WHA59.2, which expressed concern about the potential of the H5N1 strain of *Influenzavirus A* to cause a pandemic and urged Member States to disseminate to WHO collaborating centres information and relevant biological materials, including clinical specimens and viruses;

Recognizing, in particular, the importance of international sharing, with WHO collaborating centres, of clinical specimens and viruses as a contribution to assessment of the pandemic risk, development of pandemic vaccines, updating of diagnostic reagents and test kits, and surveillance for resistance to antiviral medicines,

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to continue to support the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance Network and its procedures for the routine collection, exchange and characterization of circulating strains of seasonal influenza viruses;

(2) to establish mechanisms, in accordance with their domestic laws and regulations and international regulations, such as those for biosafety and transportation, that ensure the routine and timely sharing of biological materials related to novel influenza viruses posing a pandemic threat, including H5N1 virus isolates from both humans and animals, and the routine and timely placement of data on the genetic sequences of these viruses in publicly available databases;

(3) to support implementation of WHO's global pandemic-influenza action plan to increase vaccine supply³ as a means of increasing availability and access to pandemic influenza vaccines;

¹ Documents EB120/15, EB120/16, and EB120/INF.DOC./3, respectively.

² See Annex 6 for the financial and administrative implications for the Secretariat of this resolution.

³ Document WHO/IVB/06.13 – WHO/CDS/EPR/GIP/2006.1.

(4) to continue to conduct rapid clinical and epidemiological investigation of human infections, and to share findings in a timely manner with WHO and the international community;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to continue to coordinate international surveillance of seasonal influenza viruses and viruses with pandemic potential;

(2) to strengthen the communication mechanism so that national influenza centres receive routine notifications in a timely manner of the summary results of important virological analyses conducted by WHO collaborating centres and H5 reference laboratories;

(3) to promote the broadest possible access to practical products, including pandemic influenza vaccines, resulting from research on influenza viruses, including the H5N1 strain;

(4) to take appropriate action if WHO is notified by a Member State that believes that the viruses provided by that Member State were misused by a WHO collaborating centre or an H5 reference laboratory for research or commercial purposes in a manner that violates best practice;¹

(5) to facilitate broader and more equitable regional distribution of production capacity for influenza vaccine and increased production capacity for pandemic vaccines by leading the implementation of WHO's global pandemic-influenza action plan to increase vaccine supply, emphasizing those activities that help to increase access to pandemic vaccines in developing countries and other countries that lack domestic manufacturing capacity;

(6) as appropriate, to identify, recommend and provide support for the implementation of possible options aimed at promoting the accessibility of a pandemic-influenza vaccine and antiviral medicines to all, for example by mobilizing adequate funding for research on, and development of, a pandemic-influenza vaccine and antiviral medicines;

(7) to continue to assess the evolving threat of an influenza pandemic and keep the international community informed in a timely manner;

(8) to provide support to developing countries, including those sharing their viruses, for building capacity for surveillance, case detection and reporting by facilitating the participation of scientists from countries sharing viruses in relevant research and analysis conducted by the WHO collaborating centres in the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance Network;

(9) to cooperate with Member States in order to establish feasible and sustainable incentives, including encouragement and public acknowledgement of their contributions, for sharing their viruses and genetic-sequence information;

(10) to mobilize additional support for Members States with vulnerable health systems in order to strengthen these systems and improve their state of preparedness;

¹ Document EB120/INF.DOC./3.

(11) to report annually to the Health Assembly, through the Executive Board, on the situation of pandemic influenza and global preparedness.

(Tenth meeting, 26 January 2007)