



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

FIFTY-SECOND WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
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Health conditions of, and assistance to, the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine

At the request of Israel, the Director-General has the honour to transmit to the Fifty-second World Health Assembly, the attached report by the Ministry of Health of Israel.

ANNEX

**COORDINATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ISRAELI MINISTRY
OF HEALTH AND THE PALESTINIAN HEALTH AUTHORITY
1998-1999**

1. The Palestinian Health Authority has been managing the health and medical systems in the West Bank area for the last four-and-a-half years and in the Gaza area for the past five years. Very good relations and fruitful cooperation between the Israeli Ministry of Health and the Palestinian Health Authority have been established in the past and have been intensified throughout the years. These relations which prove to be stable and encouraging due to the persistent contacts between the two parties and the ongoing dialogue, are based on the common understanding that health and medicine should not be mixed with politics and that sincere cooperation in the spheres of health and medicine is essential for the sake of the two neighbouring populations. The continuous dialogue and cooperation on the various issues in the fields of health and medicine has been performed and promoted by the activities of the following joint professional committees.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH INCLUDING PREVENTIVE MEDICINE
AND EPIDEMIOLOGY**

2. This committee deals with:
- (a) public health issues in common to both sides (like AIDS, emerging of tuberculosis, brucellosis, rabies, influenza, meningitis and outbreaks or epidemics of various infectious diseases);
 - (b) exchange of medical information and statistical reports including data on communicable and noncommunicable diseases;
 - (c) exchange of information and coordination of policies on environmental health;
 - (d) programmes for prevention of communicable diseases and projects for early detection of noncommunicable diseases;
 - (e) coordination of common policy on immunization.

3. The Palestinian Health Authority maintains the high standards of immunization (with coverage of between 90%-95% among infants and children) which have been achieved in the areas of the West Bank and Gaza prior to the transfer of authorities and responsibilities to the Palestinian Authority. The decrease in infant mortality rate from about 100-150 deaths per thousand live births in 1967 to about 20-25 deaths per thousand live births in 1992 is being maintained by the Palestinian Health Authority.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON DRUGS AND PHARMACEUTICALS

4. This committee deals with:
- (a) ensuring of quality, effectiveness and safety of drugs and pharmaceuticals produced in Israel and in the Palestinian autonomous areas;

- (b) determination and review of the rules and procedures for transportation of drugs and pharmaceuticals between the West Bank area and the Gaza area and between Israel and the Palestinian autonomous areas;
- (c) determination and review of the regulations regarding donations and importation of drugs and pharmaceuticals, in accordance with the economic agreements between the two parties;
- (d) foundation of bilateral relations between the schools of pharmacy in the Israeli and Palestinian universities.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON FOOD CONTROL

5. This committee deals with:
- (a) determination and review of the standards and regulations for ensuring good manufacturing practices in Israel and in the Palestinian autonomous areas;
 - (b) determination and review of the regulations regarding imported food products as well as of the rules and procedures for transportation of food products between the two sides.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE TOPIC OF “THE YEAR 2000 OF TOURISM”

6. According to the official forecast between 4-11 million tourists and pilgrims from all over the world are expected to be visiting the holy places to Christianity in the Palestinian autonomous areas as well as in Israel.
7. The assignments of this committee are:
- (a) to assess the expected increased needs in the field of health care (curative and preventive);
 - (b) to plan the provision of emergency medical services and the provision of primary, secondary and tertiary medical care according to the predicted requirements;
 - (c) to coordinate a system of communication and cooperation on the above-mentioned subjects between the Palestinian Health Authority and the Israeli Ministry of Health.

ADDITIONAL FIELDS OF ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN COOPERATION

Complementary medical service in Israeli hospitals provided to Palestinian patients

8. Referral of Palestinian patients to Israeli hospitals for hospitalization and for ambulatory care is continuing regularly in accordance with the medical needs for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up due to the lack of certain facilities in the Palestinian autonomous areas. About 4500 patients from the Palestinian areas

have been hospitalized in Israel during the last year (around 3000 from the West Bank and around 1500 from Gaza).

9. About 9000 patients from the Palestinian areas have been referred to Israel for ambulatory care or for diagnostic investigations and laboratory tests (around 6000 from the West Bank and around 3000 from Gaza).

10. The Palestinian patients who have been treated in Israeli hospitals could be classified into four categories:

- (a) patients referred officially by the Palestinian Health Authority;
- (b) patients who have decided voluntarily to be treated at Israeli hospitals;
- (c) emergency cases including injuries due to road accidents;
- (d) workers in Israel suffering from work accidents.

11. Referral of Palestinian patients continues regularly although no official contracts have been signed yet between the Palestinian Health Authority and Israeli hospitals. The Palestinian Health Authority is a guarantor of all payments for complementary medical care in Israel according to the regulations and procedures agreed upon by the two parties.

12. Free movement of Palestinian patients and ambulances between the Palestinian autonomous areas and Israel as well as in the regions of the West Bank is ensured by the appropriate administrative action of the Israeli coordination and liaison offices.

Training programmes in Israel for Palestinian health and medical personnel

- C One physician is participating in the Master in Public Health academic course at the school of public health in Jerusalem.
- C Six physicians are at present being trained as residents in various clinical specialties at the Hadassah Medical Centre in Jerusalem.
- C Forty-two physicians and nurses have been trained in a one month intensive course at the Trauma Centre of the Hadassah Medical Centre in Jerusalem.
- C Twelve physicians have been trained in specific short term courses in the following topics: cardiac catheterization (for adults and children), physical medicine and rehabilitation, allergology and clinical immunology and several laparoscopic procedures. The training programmes have been provided at the hospitals of Hadassah Jerusalem, Shiba Tel-Hashomer, Meir Kfar-Sava, Wolfson Holon and Augusta-Victoria Jerusalem.
- C Series of study days, seminars and workshops have been held for Palestinian physicians, nurses and health workers in the topics of AIDS, cardiology, nursing administration and health promotion. A workshop on drug addiction has been held in Gaza with participation of Israeli and Palestinian psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses and community health workers.

Cooperation between Magen-David-Adom of Israel and the Palestinian Red Crescent

13. Twenty-six Palestinian ambulance drivers have been trained in a course of first aid and emergency medicine including cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Cooperation between the division for international cooperation of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Palestinian Health Authority

14. Series of training programmes for Palestinian physicians and nurses have been organized and financed by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs in fields of medical administration, public health, clinical specialties and nursing administration.

Israeli-Palestinian joint projects developed by the Economic Cooperation Foundation (ECF)

15. Israeli-Palestinian projects have been developed jointly in the spheres of primary health care, occupational medicine, rehabilitation and postgraduate training. These projects are carried out and supervised by the Economic Cooperation Foundation.

Supplies of drugs and immunizations

16. The Palestinian Health Authority purchases drugs and immunizations from “SAREL Company-Supplies and Services for Medicine Ltd.”, the same source from which the Israeli Ministry of Health purchases these products.

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