



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

FIFTY-FOURTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
Provisional agenda item 3

A54/DIV/7
11 May 2001

Implementation of resolution EB107.R8, Health systems' performance assessment

The Director-General advised members of the Executive Board on 3 May 2001 of progress in implementing resolution EB107.R8. The text of her letter is set out below for the information of all delegations.

As we gear up for the World Health Assembly, I write to keep you informed on progress made in following up your January 2001 Executive Board resolution EB107.R8 regarding WHO's work on the assessment of health systems performance.

I have moved ahead with establishing a group to advise me on this important work, and have invited Dr Mahmoud Fathalla, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Health Research, to chair the group. I am glad to report that he has accepted. Executive Board members Dr M. Mbaiong (Chad), Dr M. Di Gennaro (Italy), Dr V.J. Grabauskas (Lithuania) and Mrs M. Abel (Vanuatu), and ACHR members Dr C. Victora (Brazil) and Dr Gita Sen (India) have also responded positively to my request that they join the group. I plan to meet with Dr Fathalla and members of the group who are in Geneva this month to discuss the way in which the group will work with me.

The Regional Directors and I have also moved ahead with plans for regional and international consultations which will enable WHO to receive and reflect on a wide range of views about optimum means for assessing health systems performance in different settings. The consultations are timed to take place between May and July 2001. Staff from WHO Regional and Geneva offices are formulating the programme for the consultation, and a plan for international technical consultations is also being developed. I will write to you again when this has been finalized. The first regional consultation is due to take place in AMRO-PAHO from 8 to 10 May 2001 in Washington D.C.

I am also establishing an expert team to peer review health systems performance methodology as part of the technical consultation process. I hope to be able to announce the name of the Chair of the peer review team at the World Health Assembly: team members will be drawn from each Region. I anticipate that all will be persons whose technical competence has earned international recognition and respect. I anticipate that the work of the peer review team will start in October 2001, drawing on the results of the regional and international consultations which take place over the next three months.

I anticipate that the technical consultations and peer reviews will enable us to fulfil the terms of the Executive Board resolution: these include the updating of methodology and data sources relevant to the performance of health systems, leading to a plan for further research,

development of the framework and relevant indicators for performance assessment, and improvement of data quality.

The approach we are adopting is designed to fulfil both the spirit of the Executive Board discussion and the letter of the resolution. We anticipate that it will lead to agreement on optimum approaches for the assessment, and then improvement, of health systems performance.

I am grateful to those Member States who have already offered to assist the WHO Secretariat with this important work, and I welcome further dialogue on the process as it evolves during the remainder of this year.

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