WHO/HSE/GCR/LYO/2014.4

Early detection, assessment and response to acute public health events:

Implementation of Early Warning and Response with a focus on Event-Based Surveillance

Interim Version

Global Capacities
Alert and Response

World Health Organization

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ACRONYMS

IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency

CDC: United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CFR: case fatality ratio

EBS: event-based surveillance

ECDC: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

EI: Epidemic Intelligence

EWAR: early warning and response

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FETP: field epidemiology training programme

GP: general practitioner

IBS: indicator-based surveillance

IHR: International Health Regulations (2005)

ILI: influenza-like illness

INFOSAN: International Food Safety Authorities Network

IT: information technology

MoA: Ministry of Agriculture

MoE : Ministry of Environment

MoH: Ministry of Health

MS: Member States

NFP: National Focal Point (IHR)

NGO: non-governmental organization

PHEIC: Public Health Emergency of International Concern

PPE: personal protective equipment

OIE: World Organisation for Animal Health

RRT: rapid response team

SOP: standard operating procedure

SMS: short message service

WHO: World Health Organization

GLOSSARY

Note: *these terms and definitions have been provided for use within the context of this document and may differ from those used in other documents.*

Acute public health event: any *event* that represents immediate threat to human health and requires prompt action, i.e. implementation of control and/or mitigation measures to protect the health of the public. This term includes *events* that have not yet led to disease in humans but have the potential to cause disease through exposure of humans to infected or contaminated food, water, animals, manufactured products, environments, or as a result of direct or indirect consequences of natural events, conflicts or other disruptions of critical infrastructure.

Alert: messages / information communicated to partners, communities and the public to help inform about, prevent the spread of, or control an *acute public health event*. In this document an alert will refer to a public health event that has been i) verified and ii) risk assessed and iii) requires an intervention (an investigation, a *response* or a communication) (also see *signal* & *event*).

Annex 2: the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR) decision Instrument which all States Parties are required to use to assess *events* within their territory in determining whether an *event* may constitute a *public health emergency of international concern* and hence require *notification* to WHO in accordance with IHR Article 6.(1)

Chemical event: a manifestation of a disease or an occurrence that creates a potential for a disease as result of exposure to or contamination by a chemical.(2)

Early Warning and Response (EWAR): the organized mechanism to detect as early as possible any abnormal occurrence or any divergence from the usual or normally observed frequency of phenomena.(2)

Epidemic Intelligence: the systematic collection, analysis and communication of any information to detect, verify, assess and investigate *events* and health risks with an early warning objective.

Evaluation: the periodic assessment of the relevance, effectiveness and impact of activities in the light of the objectives of the surveillance and response systems.(3) Also see *monitoring*.

Event: the IHR define an event as *"[…] a manifestation of disease or an occurrence that creates a potential for disease; […]"*(1) (which can include events that are infectious, zoonotic, food safety, chemical, radiological or nuclear in origin and whether transmitted by persons, vectors, animals, goods/food or through the environment.). In the context of *event-based surveillance*, an "event" also includes those of unknown origin and refers to "a *signal*" that has been "verified" (see *signal* and *alert*).