

The Working Group on Occupational Infectious Agents and Prioritisation of Occupational Infectious agents

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WGOIA

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Work-related exposure to infectious agents

- Globally, an estimated 320 000 workers die every year from communicable diseases caused by viral, bacterial, insect and animal-related biological hazards
- Most of these affect developing countries and over 5000 fatalities occur in the EU
- Women are more likely to be affected than men, as they work more often in occupations that involve biological hazards and exposure
- Given the speed and volume of international traffic and trade, these substances may spread around the globe within a few hours and start a new pandemic (EU OSHA 2009)

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Exposure to infectious agents

- Work in food production plants
- Work in agriculture
- Work activities where there is contact with animals or products of animal origin (or both)
- Work in health care, including isolation and post mortem units
- Work in clinical, veterinary and diagnostic laboratories
- Work in refuse disposal plants
- Work in sewage purification installations

(EU OSHA 2009)

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ICOH WG on OIA since 2003

- ICOH identified workplace-related infectious diseases as an area of concern
- WG on OIA was established in 2003 at the ICOH congress in Iguassu (Prof. Rantanen and Dr. Facci)
- Objectives:
 - Advise the ICOH officers and board on OIA matters
 - Identify priority OIA and major occupations
 - Develop guidelines and facts sheets to promote prevention and management of OI diseases
 - Provide new information to the ICOH Newsletter
 - Provide information for national and international occupational health events and media
 - Liaise with relevant ICOH SCs

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Tasks assigned for triennium 2009-2012
(Prof. Kogi and Prof. Ross)

- **Make recommendations on protection from OIA**
- **Examine needs for protection against OIA**
 - Prioritise organisms
 - Prioritise worker groups
- **Produce fact sheets on worker protection**
 - Specific need for H1N1 (swine flu) training materials
- **Guidelines for HIV / AIDS at the workplace**

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Membership of WG on OIA

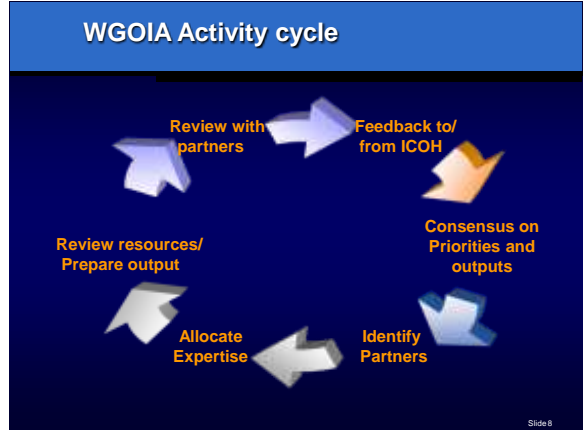
Representation (in 2012)

- 19 members from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Finland, Italy, Japan, Paraguay, South Africa, USA

Composition

- Original working group
- Additional ICOH members with specific interest
- Recruited members with expertise in priority areas

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Delivering information/communication

- **To promote awareness of OIA**
 - WG on OIA has arranged conferences and scientific meetings on OIA
- **WG on OIA**
 - Email distribution of best evidence to obtain consensus documentation
 - Information supplied to ICOH newsletter
 - Collaboration with relevant ICOH Scientific Committees

Priority groups and actions of the WG on OIA

- **Health Care Workers**
 - Guide on good practices (draft text): Prof. Stefano Porru
 - Sao Paulo 2013: joint meeting with the SC HCW, SC OH Nursing and SC OH and Development
- **Occupational Travel Medicine**
 - Guidelines on OIA and travellers: Prof Peter Leggat & others
- **All workers: managing pandemic influenza**
 - Existing evidence on SARS, avian and pandemic influenza: Prof Ken Takahashi & others
- **All workers: HIV in the workplace**
 - Existing evidence (ILO, WHO, etc.), draft policy for small workplaces: Prof Mary Ross and Dr Hugo Salgueiro

Strategic Areas of Focus (in good practice)

- **Fitness for Work**
 - methods/tools/models for assessing health?
 - needed actions according to findings?
- **Risk Assessment**
 - methods/tools/models for risk assessment?
 - actions?
- **Health Surveillance**
 - monitoring/testing, questionnaires, etc.
 - prevention, immediate actions if needed

Prioritising OIAs and groups of workers

Determining needs

- Historical (learned from the past)
- Short, medium and long term (present and future)

WORKING LIFE IS CHANGING!

Public health/epidemiological approach

- Prevalence
- Mortality
- Morbidity
- Available and feasible interventions
- Community concern

Methods, tools and models of actions needed!

Prioritisation of infectious agents

Questions to be answered:

- Environmental workplace interventions
- Vaccine preventable infections
- Personal workplace prevention
- Post exposure prophylaxis

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Output targets achieved by WGOIA

2010 2011 2012

| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---|------|------|------|
| Evaluated and selected pandemic influenza fact sheets and guides | X | | |
| Article on OIA and review of WGOIA meetings for ICOH newsletter | X | | |
| Source model HIV workplace policy and adapt to HIV management standard as template for ICOH | | X | |
| Preparation of evidence-based guide on OIA for health care workers | | X | |
| Preparation of guide on OIAs in travellers for OHPs, ICOH session | | | X |

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Future plans for the WG on OIA

New members!



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ICOH WG on Occupational Infectious Agents

Mary Ross (Chair)
 Kari Reijula (Secretary)
 Mario Bonciani
 José Carneiro
 Claudia de Hoyos
 Ruddy Facci
 Laura Flores
 Veronica Herrera
 Peter Leggat
 Claudina Nogueira
 Robert Orford
 Cristina Pantano
 Stefano Porru
 Hugo Salgueiro
 Claudio Taboadela
 Ken Takahashi
 Koji Wada
 Toru Yoshikawa
 Jaspal (JP) Ahluwalia

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