

Results: The original objective of WADEM was to improve the worldwide delivery of pre-hospital and emergency care during everyday and mass disaster emergencies. Whilst the Association has grown over the years, the founding objective has remained the same, "to work actively to solve technical, scientific, and political problems surrounding the management of emergency incidents".

The membership of WADEM is multi-disciplinary, international, collaborative, and diverse welcoming practitioners, researchers, educators, and administrators in this global healthcare endeavour.

Individual members are active in field operations, however, the organisation remains non-operational, fulfilling its mission through research, data collection, developing evidence-based standards, education, its international network, biennial World Congresses, peer-reviewed journal, committees, and task forces.

Conclusion: In collaboration with other international organisations, WADEM makes an important contribution to "Global Solutions for Global Crises".

Keywords: committees; congresses; disaster; education; emergency; humanitarian; global; networks; prehospital; research; standards; task forces; WADEM

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Problems of International Cooperation at the Interaction Level in the Network of WHO Collaborating Centres

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Objective: To characterize the actual situation in the priority activities of WHO/EHA's 14 Collaborating Centres, and to propose for discussion, the mechanisms for increasing their cooperation.

Methods: The programs and activities of the Collaborating Centres using the base of the logical Framework Approach were monitored and recorded. Global trends of the Centres Activity were analyzed.

Results: The joint activities of the Centres are coordinated in major part, only during the meetings convened once every three years. Each Centre is specialized in a definite area related to the regional peculiarity of emergencies, their geographical position, and periodicity (of natural calamities), as well as considering national peculiarities of their Disaster Medicine services.

For 2002–2003, the six most relevant topical fields for development of a coordination process in the network of Collaboration Centres were defined: 1) Public health policy in emergency and juridical support of humanitarian operations at the international level activities under the motto, "Health is a focal point for all humanitarian operations"; 2) Management and informational exchange in the sphere of humanitarian interaction in Disaster Medicine as a basis for WHO management functions; 3) Political and technical aspects of WHO humanitarian operations at the territorial and local or tactical and operation levels (according to WHO classification); 4) International partnership and

resources, mobilized to solve priority public health humanitarian operations; 5) Strengthening of the WHO's role through development of the system of personnel management; and 6) Preparation of more perfect program, field practice and expertise.

Conclusion: The main first priority fields of Collaborating Centres activities have to comprise the Info-Supply Management systems and experience changing in the branches of investigation and field practice supported by national institutions and led by a Standing Committee containing the representatives of Collaborating Centres.

Keywords: Disaster Medicine; management; priorities; WHO Collaborating Centres

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"Action Plans"—Declaration of the 5th APCDM (30 September 2000)

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The 5th APCDM was held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 27–30 September 2000. It brought together more than 300 delegates from 35 countries. The goal of the 5th APCDM was to provide a forum within which the international community, health professional and disaster experts, as well as government and non-government agencies, could explore disaster management techniques and discuss emergency medical methods, models and technologies. Eight themes were developed emphasizing the interdisciplinary roles played by the delegates. Two Co-chairs, who had broad experience and expertise, oversaw each theme and lead the discussions in addition to collecting and summarizing the ideas presented. The eight themes were:

1. Disaster Coordination and Management

Disaster is a collective responsibility, requiring a coordinated response from all parts of society, bring together diverse groups of specialists and volunteers and requires extraordinary coordination and management of people, resources, facilities and approaches.

2. Telehealth and Communication Technologies in Health

Rapid innovations and improvements in communication technologies have opened many new channels for health education and delivery, as well as disaster management. Theme 2 examined the role and applicability of these technologies to disaster medicine and management and the various issues involved in their use.

3. Sharing Pacific Rim Experiences in Disasters

Theme 3 provided an opportunity to address any unique hazards facing the Pacific Rim.

4. Effective Models for Medical and Health Response Coordination