The World Health Organization (WHO) Disability and Rehabilitation newsletter is produced three times a year and distributed via e-mail. Subscription/unsubscription requests should be sent to WHO’s Disability and Rehabilitation Team (DAR) via: mackenzier@who.int

IN THIS ISSUE

Features

• Launch of the CBR Guidelines
• Rehabilitation response to polio outbreak in Tajikistan
• WHO welcomes applicants with disabilities
• Piloting of the Wheelchair Training Package
• Updates from the regions
• Interns update
• Announcements
• Upcoming events

Launch of the CBR Guidelines

27 October 2010 - a big day for CBR!
The Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Guidelines, a joint WHO, ILO, UNESCO and IDDC publication, will be launched on this date at the inaugural session of the 4th CBR Africa Congress in Abuja, Nigeria.

CBR stakeholders (more than 180 individuals and nearly 300 organizations) have worked collaboratively over the past 5 years to produce these guidelines, which build upon key recommendations made at the International Consultation to Review Community-Based Rehabilitation in Helsinki (2003) and on the CBR joint position paper published by ILO/UNESCO/WHO (2004).

The guidelines promote CBR as a strategy which can contribute to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the development of disability inclusive national legislation, and community-based inclusive development.

The guidelines provide CBR managers, among others, with practical suggestions on how to develop or strengthen CBR programmes to ensure people with disabilities and their family members are able to access the benefits of the health, education, livelihood and social sectors. They have a strong focus on empowerment, promoting the inclusion and participation of disabled people, their family members, and communities in all development and decision-making processes. The guidelines also encourage the CBR community to undertake further evaluation and research regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of CBR across a range of different contexts.

The guidelines will be available on the DAR website following the launch on 27 October: http://www.who.int/disabilities/en/index.html

We would like to thank all partners involved in the development of the guidelines for their valuable support and contributions. For more information, please contact Chapal Khasnabis (khasnabisc@who.int).

Rehabilitation response to polio outbreak in Tajikistan

In May 2010, WHO staff members were invited to visit Tajikistan to carry out a Rapid Assessment Survey and develop a plan of action for building rehabilitation capacity for people affected by polio in Dushanbe and its surrounding areas. The main objectives were to: map and assess the capacity of existing service providers; identify capacity building needs to ensure existing providers...
can adequately respond to the needs of children affected by polio; and develop a plan for sustainable rehabilitation services in Tajikistan.

The mission was undertaken in response to reports of 564 cases of polio (as at 28 May 2010), the majority of which were wild poliovirus type 1, in children under the age of 6 years. Rehabilitation interventions including postural care, therapy, splinting and the provision of orthoses are vital within the first four months post infection to prevent paralysis and deformities. The Ministry of Health in Tajikistan invited visiting experts to provide training to doctors about management during the recovery phase. The government has since developed a tentative protocol in the management of polio.

For more information, please contact Chapal Khasnabis (khasnabisc@who.int).

WHO welcomes applicants with disabilities

The WHO Task Force on Disability, supported by a network of disability champions across the Organization, are making real progress in dismantling barriers to employment at WHO. Hot on the heels of the new welcome statement, which reads "WHO is committed to workforce diversity", comes a new policy on disability and employment, which sets out how WHO will work towards reasonable accommodation, an accessible office environment and flexible working arrangements, among other measures, to ensure fairness and respect for persons with disabilities.

But fine words mean nothing if practices do not change, which is why the audit of the e-Recruitment website was so important. This summer, WHO received an independent report identifying barriers, for example, to people with visual impairments. The process of implementing the necessary changes is already under way. Finally, disability equality training is being delivered to staff who sit on selection panels, so they are aware of the human rights approach to disability and understand the principle of reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities in the workplace. All these measures mean that WHO is better placed to welcome persons with disabilities into the workforce. Now all that's needed is for suitable qualified people to apply. Over to you!

Link to the WHO E-Recruitment site: http://www.who.int/employment/recruitment/en/

Piloting of the Wheelchair Training Package

Following the release of the Guidelines on the provision of manual wheelchairs in less resourced settings in August 2008, WHO in partnership with USAID and AUSAID has been developing a wheelchair training package to complement the recommendations outlined in the Guidelines. The first draft of the package, which includes both basic and intermediate modules, was developed by an expert committee and was recently piloted in two low-resourced settings.

Participants of the pilot project in India
The first pilot took place in Bangalore, India during June/July 2010. The two-week course focused on the basic module and was conducted by trainers from Mobility India, including two wheelchair users and WHO staff. 14 participants from the Indian subcontinent took part and both trainers and participants provided valuable feedback on the content of the package.

The second pilot also focused on the basic module and took place in Honiara, Solomon Islands in August 2010. It was carried out in partnership with the national Ministry of Health and Social Services and Motivation Australia. 11 participants from the National Rehabilitation Department and provincial CBR Centres took part in the two-week course. Again, feedback from the participants was extremely positive and valuable in finalizing the package.

A video which will accompany the training package is also currently being developed. The basic and intermediate training modules and the video are scheduled for release in 2011. For more information, please contact Chapal Khasnabis on khasnabisc@who.int.

Updates from the Regions

Country focus: Guyana
The Ministry of Health observes rehab week

Rehab Week is an annual event in Guyana held by the Guyana Health Ministry in partnership with private practitioners, to promote the value and importance of rehabilitation, raise awareness about the availability of rehabilitation services and recognize the contributions of service providers.

This year's theme was "Improving Lives through Diverse Rehab Services". There were a wide range of activities throughout the week including a road march, a fair showcasing rehabilitation services (e.g. audiology, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy) and open days at the Fort Wellington Hospital Rehabilitation Department in region 7. In Georgetown a new rehabilitation centre was opened, which is expected to provide services for thousands of residents in Region 5.

Rehabilitation week attracted wide media attention and the activities helped to improve awareness about available rehabilitation services.

Interns update

This summer Emily Smith, a Cambridge University medical student, spent seven weeks as an intern in the Department for Violence and Injury prevention and Disability. Emily conducted a literature review of research into the prevalence of violence against people with intellectual disabilities, and then looked at how prevalence figures are cited by Janet Njelesani and Emily Smith
advocacy organizations in their literature on this area. A report on the findings is in the final stages of production, in collaboration with WHO staff.

DAR also benefitted from the knowledge and skills of Janet Njelesani, who is studying for her doctorate in rehabilitation science at the University of Toronto. Janet drafted a module on rehabilitation for the guidelines on reintegration of ex combatants. In addition to a concept note on physical rehabilitation which will be the basis for the development of guidelines in this area.

We take this opportunity to thank Emily and Janet for their excellent contribution to the work of the Department.

**Announcements**

- On 19 July 2010, Dr Sara Varughese joined the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office as Programme Manager in Disability and Rehabilitation.

Following undergraduate training from CMC Velore, India, Dr Varughese did her postgraduate training in ophthalmology in India and the UK and is a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh. Later she had public health training at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, from where she gained a Masters in community eye health.

Dr Varughese has experience in health systems in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, South Africa and the UK. Before joining WHO as programme manager in disability and rehabilitation, she worked as Medical Advisor for CBM South Asia Regional Office North dealing with cross disability programs. She has been closely involved with the national Vision 2020 forum and planning for Vision 2020 in India, Nepal and Bangladesh and supported planning and curriculum development for development of a cadre of mid-level ophthalmic practitioners in India.

We take this opportunity to welcome Dr Varughese to WHO.

- The Disability and Rehabilitation Team is currently looking for a P2 level Technical Officer (Vacancy Notice No. HQ/10/VIP/TA177). Please refer to the WHO vacancies website: http://www.who.int/employment/vacancies/en/. Deadline for applications is 27 October 2010.

**Upcoming events**

- **12-16 October 2010**: Piloting of the EMRO Regional CBR Framework in Jordan, Syria and the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- **26-29 October 2010**: 4th CBR Africa Congress, Abuja, Nigeria.
- **27 October 2010**: Launch of the CBR Guidelines, Abuja, Nigeria.
- **9-10 November 2010**: 9th European Conference on Rehabilitation, Copenhagen, Denmark.

**More information**

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