GLOBAL HEALTH HISTORIES SEMINARS

Emerging issues of global public health importance:

The 2009 pandemic influenza and worst-case scenarios

Excessive concern with worst-case scenarios based on historical comparisons is fraught with errors, miscalculations and political over-reactions, according to this latest presentation. Nowhere among infectious diseases threats has this been more apparent than in influenza pandemics, with constant reminders of the worst of these, in 1918. But in the management of the 2009 pandemic, such analogies have been particularly misleading, says Professor Patrick Zylberman, chair of history of health, Ecole des hautes études en santé publique (Rennes and Paris).

The seminar will look at pandemics from different angles in order to address the following questions: How can historical perspective help to better prepare for and respond to current global public health threats? What are the differences and similarities between past pandemic and the H1N1 2009 pandemic? How the assessment of past pandemics can inform the current assessment of this 2009 pandemic?

His co-speaker in this seminar is Dr Sylvie Briand, head of the Global Influenza Programme.

Co-organized with University College London and the Wellcome Trust, together with The WHO Department of Knowledge Management and Sharing (KMS).

Contact: Hooman Momen, Coordinator WHO Press, Department of Knowledge Management and Sharing (KMS)
+41 22 791 1162 (momenh@who.int). Website: http://www.who.int/global_health_histories/en/