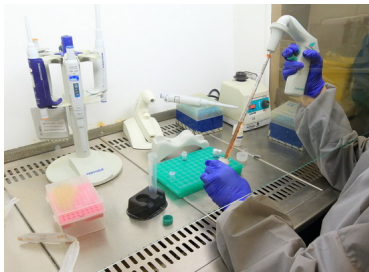




The WHO shipment of laboratory includes supplies for influenza testing by real time PCR to prepare the country for the upcoming winter season Tehran, 2 July 2020 – The World Health Organization (WHO) has delivered necessary supplies to strengthen the influenza response of the national influenza centre in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

While fully engaged in providing emergency support for the fight against the COVID-19 outbreak in the country, WHO continues to further strengthen its support for the national influenza programme. The WHO shipment including laboratory supplies for influenza testing by real time PCR and viral isolation was delivered to the national influenza centre to prepare the country for the upcoming winter season.



The centre serves as the key point of contact between WHO and the country on all matters relating to epidemiological and virological aspects of influenza. It is well equipped with molecular and cellular biology technologies to conduct virus isolation, genomic sequencing, and cloning, through which determines the common virus strains circulating in the country. The isolates are then sent to the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) to be used in the annual influenza vaccine after confirmation.

The centre alerts the WHO Global Influenza Programme on any influenza isolate that cannot be readily identified using reagents provided by WHO and immediately submits the isolate to the WHO Collaborating Centre for Reference and Research on Influenza. In addition to influenza, other viral respiratory infections, such as measles and rubella, are being studied in the laboratory.

The centre was approved to join the WHO GISRS in 1969. In 2005, after an outbreak of bird flu in some countries, health authorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran focused more heavily on the medical and economic impact of influenza and expanded the laboratory as part of the Virology Department of the School of Public Health, Tehran University of Medical Sciences. WHO evaluates the performance and quality of the laboratory through the annual accreditation programme.

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