



Participants of the consultation to promote the influenza vaccine The WHO emerging and zoonotic disease programme organized a consultative meeting to determine the feasibility of introducing seasonal influenza vaccines and developing a regional plan for increased use of seasonal influenza vaccines in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. The meeting was conducted from 30 August to 1 September 2012 in Marrakesh, Morocco.

WHO staff from the Regional Office and headquarters, consultants from Morocco, Jordan, Egypt and Islamic Republic of Iran, and experts from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention attended the meeting.

The consultation started with quick review of the recommendations arising out of an earlier intercountry meeting on estimating the burden of seasonal influenza in the Region and continued with an examination of the global and regional situation in implementation of GAP II and seasonal influenza vaccination. The experience of the United States in seasonal influenza vaccines was discussed.

Low coverage

The consultation considered the low coverage of seasonal influenza vaccine in the Region as a result of scarce policies and lack of national influenza programmes. The lack of reliable evidence on the extent and burden of influenza is another underlying factor.

5-year vaccination plan

The meeting concluded with the development of an outline of a 5-year plan for the promotion of seasonal influenza vaccination. It is intended that the plan will be implemented jointly by WHO and other partners to establish influenza programmes in the Region. The plan comprises the following components.

Estimation of the burden of disease associated with seasonal influenza

Defining priority groups for vaccination

Vaccine availability and prices

Communication strategy

Partnerships and resource mobilization.

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