



10 November 2016 – WHO’s Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, in collaboration with the Aga Khan University, conducted a 4-day training workshop for health professionals on safe handling and shipment of infectious substances, particularly viruses.

The workshop, held from 7 to 10 November at the Aga Khan University campus in Karachi, Pakistan, was organized under the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) initiative of the Infectious Hazard Management (IHM) programme. Attendees came from various countries of the Region, namely, Afghanistan, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates.

The course followed international transportation and handling standards and best practices as ascribed by the International Air Transport Association (IATA). It aimed to strengthen capacities of health professional in the Region by establishing policies and best practices for handling of infectious substances in laboratories as well as preparing them for shipment to laboratories around the world, a practice that is vital for disease surveillance and response.

The course was a reflection of partnership between the WHO Regional Office and regional academic institutions. Partnerships are a crucial element of the systems strengthening initiative of PIP which aims to enhance influenza surveillance and effectively prepare for pandemic influenza and outbreaks of epidemic-prone emerging respiratory infections.

Participants successfully graduating from the course were awarded certified shipper license.

Related links

[Pandemic Influenza Preparedness \(PIP\) Framework](#)

[International Air Transport Association \(IATA\)](#)

[Infectious Substances Shipping Training - a course for shippers](#)

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