

WHO Global Chemical Incident Emergency Response Network (ChemiNet)

The WHO Global Chemical Incident Emergency Response Network provides emergency assistance to countries in investigating and responding to the public health and medical consequences of chemical incidents and emergencies.

Background

Chemical incidents and emergencies can happen anywhere and at any time, and can result in serious short- and long-term public health consequences. The investigation and mitigation of these consequences requires specific toxicological and chemical expertise and resources, which are often not available in the country where the incident took place. In line with its Constitution and with the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), WHO is committed to providing, upon request or acceptance of Governments, appropriate assistance to Member States dealing with events of serious public health concern, including those of chemical etiology.

Structure

ChemiNet is a network of institutions, agencies, laboratories, WHO collaborating centres, poison centres, academia and individuals from different member states. ChemiNet is coordinated by WHO's department for Public Health and Environment.

Overall objective

The overall objective of ChemiNet is to reduce morbidity and mortality attributable to chemical risk factors by providing rapid and efficient toxicological, chemical, medical and analytical support to countries facing chemical incidents and emergencies of serious public health concern or disease outbreaks of suspected chemical etiology.

Specific objectives

- To assist countries in initial event verification and risk assessment by providing toxicological, chemical and medical advice.
- To contribute to event investigation through the provision of advice or technical support for the toxicological and chemical analysis of human and environmental samples.
- To join field missions and provide expertise in one or more of the following: clinical toxicology, chemical safety, analytical toxicology, environmental health and epidemiology.
- To contribute to risk mitigation and emergency medical response by providing technical recommendations and facilitating the provision of necessary equipment, including antidotes.
- To support national capacity building activities for preparedness, surveillance, investigation and rapid response.

Further information

For further information or questions, please contact us by email at ipcsalert@who.int.

