

# THE PERFORMANCE OF A NATIONAL HEALTH WORKFORCE:

## HOW TO ASSESS IT? HOW STRENGTHEN IT?



Neuchâtel, Switzerland, 14-16 October 2009



*An International Symposium placed under the aegis of*

*The World Health Organization*

*and jointly organized by :*

*The Swiss Health Observatory, Neuchâtel, Switzerland*

*The Federal Office of Public Health, Bern, Switzerland*

*The Center for Health Workforce Studies, State University of New York, U.S.A.*

*The Centre de Sociologie et de Démographie Médicales, Paris, France*



## OUTLINE OF THE SYMPOSIUM

### I. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

A successful health care system depends heavily on an adequately sized and well-trained workforce. The delivery of health services requires sufficient financial resources, up-to-date technology, and, above all, a productive health workforce. However, in many countries today, the performance of health workers is weakened by a large number of shortcomings and bottlenecks, including inadequate training, lack of continuing education, supply and demand imbalances, geographic maldistribution, insufficient work coordination, overlapping work domains, adverse working conditions, absence of professional incentives, etc. All these negative factors, if not corrected by a strong process of management and planning, decrease the efficiency of the health care system and reduce the productivity of health workers, fueling their emigration to other countries or directing them to careers outside the health sector.

Responding to discussions in Barcelona (April 2005) and Lisbon (October 2007), the symposium in Neuchâtel will provide decision makers and researchers an opportunity to exchange their views about the human resources of the health care system.

The participants are invited to contribute papers on the various issues concerning the health workforce; in particular **efforts designed to measure and improve performance**. The themes suggested are briefly presented hereafter:

► **Measurement of workforce performance**

Studies of the issue have been carried out in different countries, through both health worker (e.g., amount of services provided per capita and unit of time) and patient-related indicators (e.g., queueing time, degree of satisfaction). Some studies have explored more complex issues (e.g., outcomes of treatment) which seem to exceed the strict field of workforce performance. The symposium will hopefully provide a comprehensive view of the state-of-the-art in the matter.

► **Observation of the mutual relationship of health workforce performance and health system performance.**

The issues below (among others) may be addressed:

- how is care organized between hospital, long term care, home care ? how is care provision shared between the different actors and institutions ?
- what skills should the general practitioner and the general nurse have in the future to coordinate the works of the specialized care providers ?
- what approaches have been used in the implementation of electronic patient records and e-health ?
- what approaches have been used and what results have been obtained in the field of health worker recruitment and retention?

► **Action for improving workforce performance**

Action programmes in the matter have been tested in many places. The symposium will examine primarily two fields, with an emphasis on the future prospects:

- Performance of health workers viewed through **skill mix**, teamwork, task delegation, interprofessional cooperation; presentation of national and/or local experiences with positive or negative outcomes; explanatory factors; policy and legal implications...
- Performance of health workers gained or lost through **international migration**, impacts on the sending countries, on the receiving countries, policy implications...

## **II. DATE AND LOCATION**

The symposium will be held in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, from Wednesday, 14 October 2009 (opening at 9.00) through Friday, 16 October 2009 (closing at 13.00). The symposium will be hosted by the Swiss Health Observatory, n° 10, Espace de l'Europe, Neuchâtel, Switzerland (beneath the railway station of Neuchâtel).

## **III. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**There is no registration fee.** Each participant (or his/her institution) takes charge of his/her own travel and accommodation expenses. Details concerning the practical arrangements in Neuchâtel (hotel reservation, etc.) will be provided in spring 2009. Upon request, an official letter of invitation can be sent to participants who need it.

#### IV. WORKING LANGUAGE

The working language of the symposium is English.

#### V. DEADLINES

If you are interested in attending the symposium, please take note of the three deadlines below:

**Before 15 February 2009:** Please email a declaration of intent to Bui Dang Ha Doan (address below). The declaration is required, as it is your provisional registration.

**Before 15 April 2009:** Please email the abstract of your contributed paper (maximum 2 pages, double spaced). If you do not wish to contribute a paper, please send a message. We shall acknowledge receipt in both cases. The symposium accepts one paper per participant.

**Before 15 September 2009:** Please email your full paper (maximum 20 pages, double spaced, including text, graphs, statistical tables, references) to all the participants listed in a document provided by the organizers.

#### VI. CONTACT AND REGISTRATION

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#### VII. THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE SYMPOSIUM

**Mario Roberto Dal Poz**

Department of Human Resources for Health  
World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

**Galina Perfilieva (Ms)**

Programme of Human Resources, WHO Regional Office  
for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark

**Catherine Gasser (Ms)**

Federal Office of Public Health  
Bern, Switzerland

**Hélène Jaccard-Ruedin (Ms)**

Swiss Health Observatory  
Neuchâtel, Switzerland

**Jean M. Moore (Ms)**

Center for Health Workforce Studies, State University of  
New York, USA

**Bui Dang Ha Doan**

Centre de Sociologie et de Démographie Médicales,  
Paris, France

## VIII. REFERENCES

➔ *Symposium of Barcelona*

Arié Rotem, Galina Perfilieva, Mario Roberto Dal Poz, Bui Dang Ha Doan (eds) – **National Health Workforce : Assessment of the Past and Agenda for the Future**, C.S.D.M., Paris, 2006, 445 p.

➔ *Symposium of Lisbon*

Jean M. Moore, Mario Roberto Dal Poz, Galina Perfilieva, Bui Dang Ha Doan (eds) – **National Health Workforce : the Growth of Challenging Trends**, C.S.D.M., Paris, 2008, 441 p.

## IX.- INFORMATION ON THE CITY OF NEUCHÂTEL

Neuchâtel is a charming Swiss city on the shore of the Lake of Neuchatel.

### Transportation

Neuchâtel is linked by train to the main cities in Europe.

From Geneva International Airport, every hour a direct train (without connection) brings you to Neuchatel in about 1h20.

From Zurich International Airport, every hour a direct train (without connection) brings you to Neuchatel in about 1h50.

### Some sites of interest

The city has several interesting museums (museum of ethnography, museum of art and history...).

Visits of interest in the area :

The international museum of clocks and watches in *La Chaux-de-Fonds* (25 km)

The underground watermills which were operational until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, at *Col-des-Roches au Locle*.

The absinth distillery Artemisia at *Couvet* in the Swiss Jura (functioning legally since March 2005).

**Information:** [tourisme.neuchatelois@ne.ch](mailto:tourisme.neuchatelois@ne.ch)

<http://www.neuchatelville.ch/>

<http://www.watchvalley.ch/>