

The Summit Bulletin

*Presenting highlights of the Ministerial Summit on
Health Research, Mexico 2004*

Summit at a turning point!

The 3rd day of the Summit saw intense discussions continuing in a positive manner both amongst ministers and between ministers and other participants. The excitement that this is a unique and historical opportunity for promoting an effective research-policy interface in countries is palpable.

The flavor of the Summit saw a turning point yesterday - from *description* and asking the 'what', to *analysis* and discussions of 'how'. Ministers are now being stimulated and in turn are challenging participants from around the world to assist their decision making and policies.

Comments and feedback on the Mexico Agenda kept coming in and the Agenda Writing Team was busy making changes well past midnight.

For more coverage please visit the official Summit website:
www.who.int/rpc/summit.

Using knowledge to improve equity!

The morning plenary saw a powerful sequence of internationally acclaimed experts discuss the generation of the right type of research; effective ways of using that research; and ensuring that research helps reduce health inequities. "New research should begin and end with systematic reviews", said Iain Chalmers, and he proposed that "biased under-reporting of results is unethical".

"Research evidence helps to build consensus" – J. Lomas

Jonathan Lomas stressed the need for joint knowledge production for research use. He stressed the need for two way communication between researchers and decision makers. Gita Sen reminded participants that many factors, including power, determine whether research will result in "winds of change" or "voices in the wilderness".

Ministers provide a dose of reality!

The roundtables continued on Thursday where ministers debated key issues in using knowledge for better health. Human resources for health as a research agenda generated great interest amongst ministers. The type of evidence needed in human resource issues was considered different by ministers; and quite obvious to those working in health systems. Movement of manpower from less resource to developed countries was considered in need of innovative strategies for prevention.

A special roundtable was held on integration of health research into National Health Information Systems.

Quote of the day:

“We need...better research, and research done for the right reasons”

-Iain Chalmers

A Reminder:

“you have to bring the public back into public health ”

-R. Narayan, India

Dinner, Maps and Codes

Ministerial Summit participants were invited to a delightful dinner at the beautiful Ministry of Health building in Mexico City. The Director-General of WHO, ministers of health and other dignities were in attendance. The scenic setting, wonderful music, and tasteful cuisine showed the gracious hospitality of Mexico and the rich culture of this country. Julio Frenk thanked all participants for coming to Mexico and participating in the Summit.

Participants were also treated to an incisive, sharp and witty presentation by J. Enriquez, who covered the history and use of life sciences. The focus of the talk was on the value of “maps” and “codes” in the development of countries in the 21st century.

The Summit Bulletin is produced by the Summit Reporting Team and is a summary of the highlights of each day. It is not meant to serve as an official record of the meeting and is not considered an official meeting document of WHO or any member state. For more information contact Dr. Adnan A. Hyder (hydera@who.int).