
Collaborating Centre Connection - September 2012

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Introducing the Team Leader of the WHO Global Occupational Health Programme: Dr. Ivan Dimov Ivanov



Dr. Ivan Dimov Ivanov was appointed in September 2011 as Team Leader of the WHO Global Occupational Health Programme in Geneva. The team leader has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the WHO Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health, and for collaboration with other internal technical programmes and outside partners.

In addition, Ivan currently carries out several technical projects; his project portfolio includes scaling up coverage with occupational health services, workers' health in a green economy and climate change policies, as well as occupational diseases.

Ivan started working at the WHO in 2000, first in the Regional Office for Europe as manager of the European programme on environmental health policy, and subsequently in charge of the EURO occupational health programme. In 2005, he was transferred to WHO Headquarters where he facilitated the development of the Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health and initiated a global campaign on the elimination of asbestos-related diseases as well as projects on occupational carcinogens in several countries.



Prior to joining WHO, Ivan worked in the Ministry of Health of his native country, Bulgaria, as senior ministerial adviser in occupational health, where he led a large scale EU project on restructuring occupational health, including legislation and creation of occupational health services.

Ivan is a medical doctor with an MPH in occupational health from Bulgaria and a PhD in sociology of health and environment from Michigan State University. He has received training also in risk assessment, health administration, environmental health, epidemiology and project management. In his work Ivan uses English, French, Spanish and Russian. He is looking forward to continuing the implementation and collaboration that takes place under the WHO Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health, with a global family of more than 60 respected national institutions.

Spotlight: New WHO Collaborating Centre in Sri Lanka Focuses on Training Primary Care Providers

By Professor Rohini de Alwis Seneviratne



Within the country of Sri Lanka, an island in South Asia, lying off the southern tip of India in the Indian Ocean, the Department of Community Medicine within the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, has been running a WHO

supported programme for training primary care providers since the 1980s. We now have the honour and privilege of being designated a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre (WHOCC) for Occupational Health as of 30th July 2012.

Training of primary health care (PHC) workers in Occupational Health and Safety (OCHS) was started by this Department in 1980 with support of WHO SEARO. The objective of training PHC workers was to provide basic occupational health services and a safe work environment to the population. This approach also enables the trained PHC workers to access workers in the informal sector, backyard and small scale enterprises. The Department has a field practice area, a primary health care unit of the Ministry of Health providing direct access to implement essential occupational health interventions in workplaces, which can be considered as an added advantage. Since 1980, training in OCHS is carried out every year, with WHO funds received under the biennial allocation.

The Department has been conducting extension courses of study leading to the award of a certificate, diploma and postgraduate diploma in occupational health and safety targeting PHC workers, safety officers and other personnel in industries for the past 10 years. Development of educational materials such as books and manuals, video clips and posters have supported the teaching and training programmes and also have proved to be valuable material for the workplaces. The laboratory, equipped with basic occupational hygiene equipment, has received support of the WHO and is being used in teaching and research activities in the Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) educational programmes for medical students, postgraduate trainees for an MSc (Community Medicine) and those following the extension courses in OCHS.

The Health Systems Research Unit of the Department is in a unique position to bring expertise to support research of the Global Network and we look forward to active collaboration as a CC in the future.

Spotlight: First International Technical Seminar in Latin America to Protect Workers Using Personal Protective Equipment

By Heinz W. Ahlers, Jose Espinoza, Maria Lioce, and Abram Vera



The Chilean Institute of Public Health (ISP) in cooperation with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) organized the First International Technical Seminar in Latin America to focus on elements of personal protective equipment (PPE). On the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of May 2012, members of NIOSH's National Personal Protective Technology

Laboratory (NPPTL) and the Global Collaboration Program came together with their counterparts from ISP in Santiago, Chile to conduct educational workshops on PPE. One of the challenges of ISP has been to become a national point of reference in respect to the quality on elements of PPE. For this reason, it was decided to hold this event to share knowledge and experiences among the participating countries on the correct use of PPE based on the type of hazard in the workplace.

The seventy participants included representatives from the Ministries of Health and Labor, the International Labor Organization, multinational manufacturers of PPE,

various academic bodies and industrial sectors such as construction and mining. The ISP and the NIOSH team addressed topics such as the respirator certification process, testing and quality control of approved products, selection and use of respirators on work sites both in the United States and Chile (including the ISP guidelines), and the importance of certification. The Latin American manufacturers and government regulators recognize the benefit of the NIOSH certification process as one of the factors contributing to the goal of a global standard for respirators.

Emphasis during the event was placed on respiratory protection, because selection and quality of these elements is one of the ways to prevent occupational respiratory diseases, such as silicosis. Chile is committed to eradicate silicosis by 2030. NIOSH has cooperated with technical assistance in various components of their national plan, including respiratory protection. In this region of the world, education on PPE is extremely important due to the high number of workers who must use respiratory protection to keep themselves safe on a daily basis. According to an ISP survey, 80% of the respirators used in the workplace in Chile have been certified by NIOSH, assuring a high level of protection for those users.

As another part of the seminar program, ISP officially launched the PPE Laboratory, which will develop research related to PPE throughout Latin America. NIOSH provided technical assistance to the laboratory related to the selection of anthropometric measurement equipment, and continue to help the laboratory as they work towards the development of national anthropometric measurements of the Chilean population for the manufacturing of the standards sizes of elements of PPE.

NIOSH representatives also visited and strengthened relations with FUNDACENTRO in Brazil, which has an advanced laboratory in the process of developing PPE related educational products. FUNDACENTRO is open to collaborating with ISP and NIOSH, further fortifying the Pan American cooperation and relationship of these three organizations from the WHO Occupational Health Network.

All these activities support the effort to eliminate silicosis and confirm the importance of the continuing collaboration among the Centres of the WHO CC Network for the achievement of the goals of the Global Plan of Action for Workers' Health.

NIOSH Total Worker Health™ - A New Publication Provides Support for Health Protection and Promotion of the WHO Global Healthy Workplace Programme

By Dr. L. Casey Chosewood, Dr. Anita Schill and Heidi Hudson

The protection, preservation, and improvement of the health and well-being of all people who work are goals shared by workers, their families, and employers. Today, more than ever, there is increasing evidence that the work environment and the overall health, safety and well-being of the workers within it are strongly connected.

Diminished health and increased injury, whether caused by work or resulting from non-work activities, reduces quality of life, opportunity, and income for workers and those dependent upon them. In June 2011, NIOSH announced the development of Total Worker Health™, a new program that evolved from the earlier NIOSH Steps to a Healthier U.S. Workforce and NIOSH WorkLife Initiatives. Total Worker Health™ is a strategy integrating occupational safety and health protection with health promotion to prevent worker injury and illness and to advance worker health and well-being. NIOSH believes that integrating the protection of worker health and safety with evidence-based health promotion will be a key strategy for building a strong economy on the foundation of safe jobs and healthy workers.



Dr. L. Casey Chosewood, a member of the WHO Healthy Workplaces Network, co-leads NIOSH's Total Worker Health™ Program with Dr. Anita Schill. We're pleased to announce an important milestone, the recent publication of *The NIOSH Total Worker Health™ Program: Seminal Research Papers 2012*. This

document is a compilation and update of three papers from the 2004 NIOSH-sponsored, Steps to a Healthier U.S. Workforce Symposium. The papers established the rationale for expanding research on the benefits of integrated programs to improve worker health and workplace safety. These papers are widely cited and are considered seminal writings on the science and practice of integrating health protection and health promotion. This new publication provides strong support for the approach of integrated approaches of health protection and health promotion of the global WHO Healthy Workplaces Programme. Visit the NIOSH Science Blog to engage in discussion with the lead authors Glorian Sorensen, Seth Seabury, and Ron Goetzl. For more information go to <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/TWH/> or contact the Total Worker Health™ core team at twh@cdc.gov.