

DECEMBER 2021

# THE IHR PROJECT NEWSLETTER

Updates from UKHSA's  
International Health Regulations  
Strengthening Project

## In this edition

- Updates from the IHR Project
- New resources on the IHR Project Knowledge Hub
- Media roundup
- Wellbeing tip

Welcome! This publication provides updates for the project's internal colleagues and external partners. If you have any queries, feedback or contributions please contact:

[IHR.Programme@phe.gov.uk](mailto:IHR.Programme@phe.gov.uk)

Or alternatively, reach out to our communication leads:

Ellie Fairfoot, Project Officer  
[ellie.fairfoot@phe.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.fairfoot@phe.gov.uk)

Beenish Arfeen, Project Administrator  
[beenish.arfeen@phe.gov.uk](mailto:beenish.arfeen@phe.gov.uk)

Annabel Grieve, Project Manager  
[annabel.grieve@phe.gov.uk](mailto:annabel.grieve@phe.gov.uk)



# Updates from the IHR Project

Access the latest news from the IHR Project and its partners on the **"News" page of our online knowledge hub.**



# IHR Strengthening Project Confirmed for a Further 3 Years

This month, the project received the fantastic news that the DHSC have confirmed a further 3 years of funding for the IHR Strengthening Project, 2022-2025.

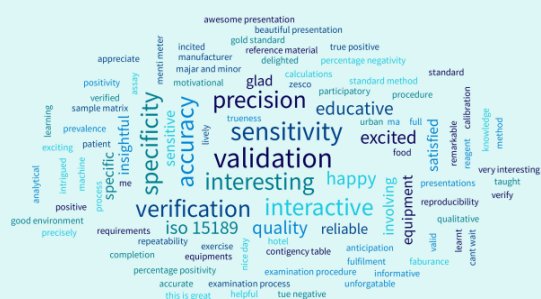
We are excited to expand on the work we are doing, supporting public health system strengthening and IHR implementation and to continue working with our fantastic partner organisations to improve national, regional and global health security. It is an extremely exciting time for our project and we are looking forward to what the next three years will bring.

## Assay verification training to four laboratories in the Zambia Copperbelt Province

One of the IHR Strengthening project activities is to support laboratory services in developing their quality management systems to ISO 15189 standards. Verification of methods and equipment is an essential aspect of this activity and forms part of the assurance of an accurate laboratory result.

Towards this goal, the IHR laboratory team and a Ministry of Health trainer developed and delivered a workshop on assay verification to 15 laboratory staff from four laboratories in the Zambia Copperbelt province, including section heads, biomedical scientists and laboratory technicians. Based on daily reflections and participant feedback, the training was received well, participants particularly enjoyed the practical exercises, group discussions and the interaction with participants from other laboratories. They felt that the training was valuable and applicable to their work and when asked what changes they would make to their practice as a result of the training, one participant said, "I'm confident I will use the knowledge gained from this training to apply it to my workplace in order to strengthen understanding about method validation and verification and 'lot to lot' verification. The workshop was also a welcome learning experience for the IHR team; for example, ensuring prerequisite skills on data analysis are embedded in the training to improve the training experience. The workshop was also able to highlight the teams' ability to adjust to changes at a rapid pace, having to adapt some components of the delivery from face-to-face to virtual.

**Write up to 10 words that will remind you of your learning from today**





# Updates from the IHR Project

## The Public Health Lab Network in KP Province

The Public Health Reference Lab (PHRL) of NIH Pakistan has been working with UKHSA to develop the high-quality public health laboratory with excellent internal standards. As part of this, establishing a network of public laboratories with a linkage to PHRL has remained a top priority. A two day lab assessment workshop for KP province public health labs was held focussing on assessing the labs systems using a standardized scientific tool (LAT 2). As well as laboratory assessment, the workshop was imperative in developing the network of public health laboratories going forward.

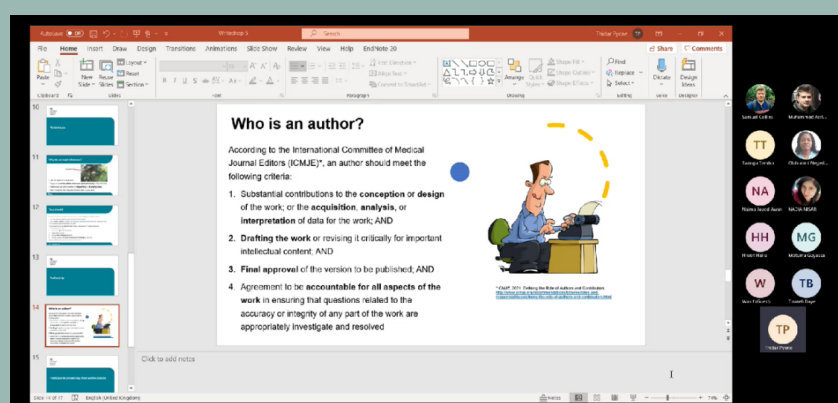
PHRL has praised the work of the lab managers in developing excellent lab quality protocols as well as the lab network strengthening forged through this work.

**[Read more about the work involved on the hub](#)**



## “The Writeshop”: Improving Academic Writing Skills for IHR Strengthening Project Staff

Strengthening local capacity is one of the triple mandates of the IHR Strengthening Project. As part of achieving this mandate and based off feedback from project staff on their capacity building needs, a series was designed and delivered within the project called “The Writeshop”. The Writeshop was a series of academic writing workshops aimed at supporting project staff with their writing and facilitating the development of academic publications. Running from September through December 2021, the series was delivered virtually with 12 of the IHR project’s local staff from Zambia, Africa CDC, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Myanmar participating.



The series covered topics such as the principles in writing publications and how to write sections of an academic paper, as well as literature searching and critical appraisal sessions provided by the UKHSA library services. We look forward to seeing the academic work that comes as a result of these sessions in the new year!

**[Read more about the series on the hub](#)**

# Updates from the IHR Project

## Successful Outcomes from the Small Group Network Meetings for Public Health Laboratories in Pakistan



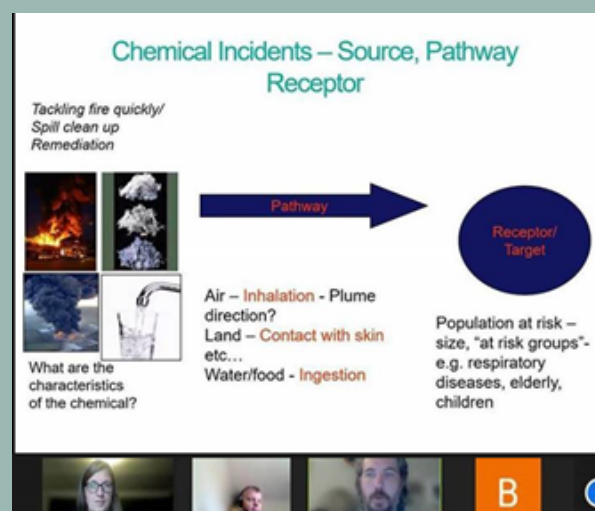
Since 2016, UKHSA in collaboration with National Institute of Health (NIH) Pakistan has held regular small group network meetings with the technical leads from public health reference labs across Pakistan. Over the years, these small groups for labs have provided a forum for technical public health leads to share learning.

A recent example of success of these groups at a country level was the agreement on the Omicron variant and genome sequencing protocols and standard operating procedures, including sharing of resources and expertise. Similarly, the group led on the discussions around the future sustainability of labs post COVID for both National/NIH and provincial level, reinforcing the importance of communication and collaboration in these uncertain times.

**[Read the full article on the hub](#)**

## Chemical Foundational Training Needs Assessment Workshop - Zambia

As part of the IHR Strengthening project the Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Operations (RCE) directorate are working closely with the Zambian National Public Health Institute (ZNPHI). A key objective is to deliver chemicals foundational training in country. This is currently scheduled for early 2022 and aims to provide training in relation to prevention, preparedness, response and recovery for chemicals and public health. As part of planning for the training Nick Brooke, Lydia Izon-Cooper and the country lead Joe Pett held a 2-hour workshop with ZNPHI remotely. The purpose was to introduce the attendees to chemical incidents, undertake an interactive exercise and to identify key competencies they would like to develop as part of the foundational training (see Table 1). The workshop was well attended by over 40 trainees from ZNPHI and other stakeholders including the Ministry of Health and Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA). The feedback received has been very positive. Going forward, further discussions will be undertaken with ZNPHI to help refine the key competencies further and training materials will be developed accordingly to the Zambia context prior to delivery in-country.





# Updates from the IHR Project

## Acknowledgement in WHO portal...

The IHR Project has received thanks in the WHO newsletter for our updates on COVID Activities - The WHO Strategic Partnerships for IHR (2005) and Health Security Portal (SPH) identifies over 60 bilateral or multilateral donors or partners engaged in financial and/or technical support for IHR capacity development across the 19 IHR technical areas and we share our COVID activities through the portal on a quarterly basis, across all countries & regions.

See link below:

[Donor Profile | Strategic Partnership for Health Security and Emergency Preparedness \(SPH\) Portal \(who.int\)](#)

### UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is responsible for planning, preventing and responding to external health threats, and providing intellectual, scientific and operational leadership at national and local level, as well as on the global stage. UKHSA ensures the nation can respond quickly and at greater scale to deal with pandemics and future threats.

The SPH Portal team is in constant contact with donors and partners to keep the Resource Landscape section updated. This effort not only improves resource allocation efficiency and IHR and health security implementation, but it also expands the SPH Portal's Partner Matching capabilities which directly translate into increased support to Member States.

In the latest round of updates the SPH Portal team has received, validated, and published data from three donors and partners. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provided contribution activities for Member States in all 6 WHO regions related to 12 different technical areas and 12 different public health events. The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) submitted activities for all 51 ASEF Partner countries including activities related to COVID-19. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) provided activities regarding Member States in the WHO African Region related to the ongoing fight against the current pandemic.

**The SPH Portal team would like to thank all the donors and partners and to kindly ask them to please share any new contribution activity, event and news.**

## New Resources Available on The Knowledge Hub

Access the latest resources and publications from the IHR Project and its partners on the **"Resources" page of the knowledge hub.**

## Workforce Development Tool of the Month: Understanding and Leading Change

This is the seventh 'tool of the month' from the IHR Project's Workforce Development Team. The team are sharing their favourite concepts, models, hints, and tips that resonate with them and really helped them out in different work environments. Please come back each month to see what they are sharing.

This month's tool looks at Simple Rules - how they help teams and leaders make sense and give direction.

**Access it on the hub**

### IHR Strengthening Project Workforce Development



#### Understanding and Leading Change

This is the seventh tool of the month from the IHR Project's Workforce Development Team. We are sharing our favourite concepts, models, hints, and tips that resonate with us and really helped us out in different work environments. Please come back each month to see what we are sharing. As with any concepts, models, hints and tips - these do not represent a fixed way of doing things, they are not hard and fast rules - if they resonate with you please make use of them - if they don't that's fine too!

There are many different types of change that can happen within an organisation or team, not only will you be involved in ensuring the technical and operational changes run smoothly - you will also be responsible for the staff who are supporting and subject to the change. To help you understand the potential impact of change on your staff, and the helpful ways to provide support we are sharing a commonly used change model along with hints and tips to help you navigate the journey.



#### What is change?

Change can be described as the process of causing a function, practice, or thing to become different compared to what it is at present or what it was in the past. The change might apply to an individual, a team, department, or whole organisation and in some cases a whole system, which may involve external partners and service users.



#### The impact of change on you and your colleagues

##### The individual

People experience change differently - because we are all shaped by past experiences, our personalities, and value. It is important to appreciate individual circumstances.



##### The Team

Each team had a different experience of change, some teams have experienced a lot of changes together, others may have been 'static' for several years. It is important to appreciate the 'journey' on which the team has been.

# Monthly Media Round Up

A selection of recent appearances of the IHR Project in the media. Please click the items to view the posts.



Dr Sam Collins  
@DrSamColl

Great to see the work of the [@UKHSA](#) [#ihr\\_strengthening](#) project referenced in the [@FCDOGovUK](#) position paper on health systems strengthening for global health security and universal health coverage [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/upl...](#)

5:41 PM · Dec 21, 2021 · Twitter for Android



Taonga Thomas Tembo  
@TaongaThomasTe2

Exciting week so far in [#Ndola](#) for the team [@UKHSA](#)/[@UKinZambia](#) working with Lab scientists from [@mohzambia](#) on Method Validation/ Verification towards [#IHR\\_Strengthening](#) in [#Zambia](#) [@ZMPublicHealth](#) [@epidemiolojoe](#) [@DrSamColl](#) [@DAKhavein](#) [@abl\\_g](#)



11:29 AM · Dec 1, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone



NIH Pakistan [@NIH\\_Pakistan](#) · 30 Dec 2021

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Islamabad arranged hands on training on DHIS-2, in collaboration with UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) for for Integrated Disease Surveillance & Response System (IDSRs) of KPK including merged districts.



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Ellie Fairfoot  
@fairfoot\_ellie

New [#IHR\\_Strengthening](#) news alert check out the most recent articles on our [@info\\_TGHN](#) Knowledge Hub! [gphihr.tghn.org/news/](#)

2:28 PM · Dec 30, 2021 · Twitter Web App



Dr Sam Collins  
@DrSamColl

Great to receive confirmation from [@UKgovGHS](#) of v strong funding for 3 more yrs of the [@UKHSA](#) [#ihr\\_strengthening](#) project. Now is the time to build on collective successes and rise to the challenges and opportunities identified by [#Covid\\_19](#) in

9:07 PM · Dec 16, 2021 · Twitter for Android

## December Wellbeing Tip

Whilst the holidays are for many of us a chance to relax and "be merry" the Christmas period can also be a difficult time for some. The nature of the season and celebrations can take a toll on our wellbeing for various reasons - dark evenings, changes in routine, missing loved ones, feeling social and financial pressures, reflecting on the year - to name a few.

The charity Mind has a great resource looking at Christmas and your mental health, with tips, support and help you can access. [Christmas and mental health | Mind, the mental health charity - help for mental health problems](#)

With that said, wishing you all the best for the New Year and a wonderful 2022!