

Agreement on a pandemic influenza preparedness framework for the sharing of viruses and benefit sharing

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On 16 April 2011, a working group of World Health Organization (WHO) member states agreed on a pandemic influenza preparedness framework [1]. It regulates the sharing of viruses within the WHO Laboratory Global Influenza Surveillance Network (GISN) [2] and the access to vaccines, antiviral drugs, diagnostic kits, and other benefits, in particular with regard to lower-income countries. It foresees mandatory regular contributions from industry partners.

The four-year negotiations by 193 WHO member states began in November 2007, at a time when concerns about the fair distribution of benefits impaired the timely global sharing of influenza sequences.

The agreed framework will be presented to the World Health Assembly in May 2011 for its consideration and approval. The agreement will strengthen global preparedness for potential future influenza pandemics.

More detailed background information and a comment on the implications of this achievement has been published by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control [3].

References

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