Core Capacity Requirements

The International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005 define core capacity requirements for each of the 194 countries that are party to the IHR to ensure that all countries have the ability to detect and respond appropriately to any potential public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). Countries were given two years – from 2007 to 2009 – to assess their existing systems and processes for compliance with the IHR core capacity requirements. As of 2009, countries have entered the implementation phase and are in the process of developing or enhancing their processes and systems to address any gaps identified through the assessment process.

IHR Core Capacity Requirements

Community Level

- Detect events involving disease or death above expected levels
- Report unusual events to the next level of public health responsibility

Intermediate Level

- Confirm the status of reported events and support or implement control measures
- Assess reported events immediately and report essential information to the national level

National Level

- Assess reports of urgent events within 48 hours
- Notify the WHO immediately through the National Focal Point of all potential PHEICs
- Determine rapidly the control measures required to prevent further spread
- Support local investigations
- Provide information-sharing links with health care facilities, national entry points, and other key operations areas
- Establish, operate and maintain a national public health emergency response plan
- Provide all of the above on a 24-hour basis