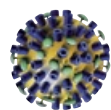
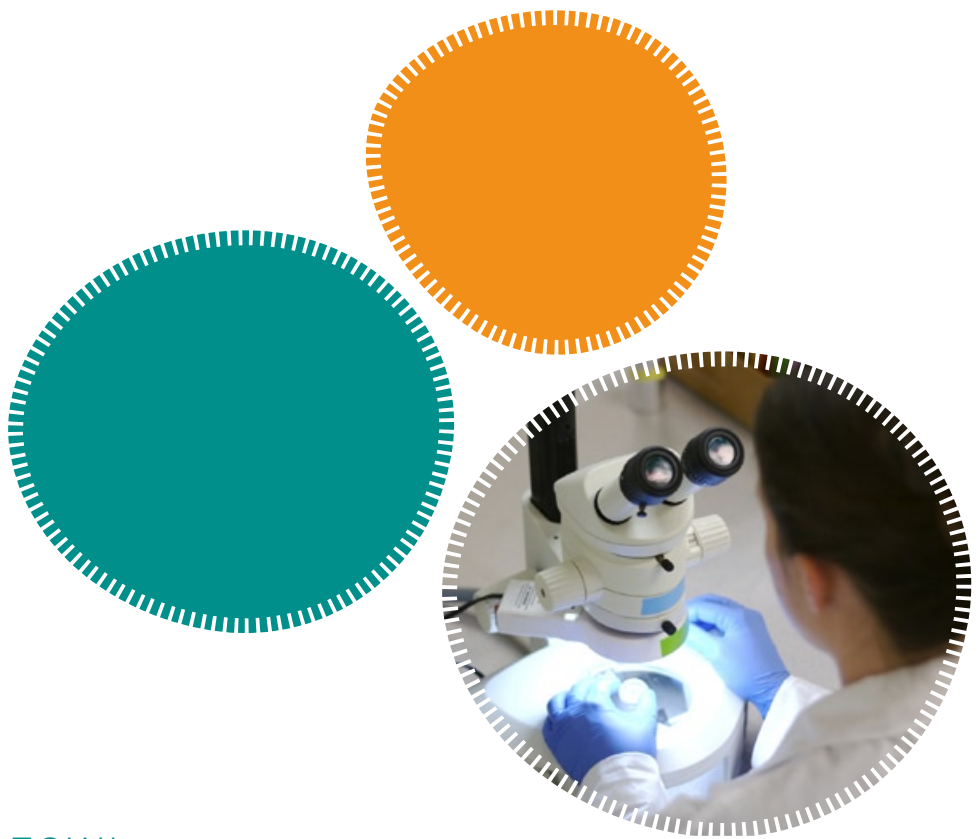


EUROPEAN
SCIENTIFIC
WORKING GROUP
ON INFLUENZA



ESWI

... EUROPEAN SCIENTISTS FIGHTING INFLUENZA



ABOUT ESWI

The European Scientific Working group on Influenza (ESWI) is a partnership organization of stakeholders in the combat against influenza who aim to reduce the burden of influenza in Europe by promoting stakeholder management as well as changes in attitude and behaviour towards influenza intervention strategies.

ESWI stakeholders include Public Health Officials and Permanent representations to the EU, MEPs, EU Directorate-Generals, ECDC and EFSA, scientific opinion leaders in public health, healthcare providers, national and international organizations of nurses/GPs/pharmacists and medical specialists, young scientists, elderly and patient organizations, and the press.

Partnership organisations like ESWI are established to meet specific objectives and to undertake projects to address problems that neither partner could tackle adequately on its own. A successful long-term partnership is built on common grounds. In the case of ESWI, this common ground is a social concern to improve public health in Europe.

ABOUT INFLUENZA

Influenza is a contagious disease caused by influenza viruses. Although often mild, it can cause severe illness in some, and even death. In Europe, more people die each year of influenza than from traffic accidents.

Severe disease is unpredictable, but hospitalizations and deaths mainly occur in at-risk groups, normally those over age 60 and some with chronic illnesses (mainly diabetes, heart or lung disease). The World Health Organization (WHO) urges Member States to vaccinate all high risk groups and recommends at least 75% vaccine coverage. Influenza vaccines are safe and protect against influenza.

ESWI AS A PARTNERSHIP

ESWI is a public-private partnership of individual influenza experts (the ESWI members), institutions and stakeholder organizations (the ESWI advisers) and the pharmaceutical industry. ESWI regards engagement with pharmaceutical companies as essential to its mission to lessen the impact of influenza, asking each company to provide equal financial support to ESWI as an annual contribution. ESWI thus maintains impartiality, with members and sponsoring companies who are fully committed to ESWI's scientific independence, enshrined in the articles of incorporation and laid out in the official rules of practice.

ESWI's members

Dr. R. Amaral-Marques
Portugal

Dr. G.A. van Essen
The Netherlands

Dr. T. Heikkinen
Finland

Dr. P. Openshaw
UK

Dr. A.D.M.E. Osterhaus
The Netherlands

Dr. R. Prymula
Czech Republic

Dr. T.D. Szucs
Switzerland

Dr. S. van der Werf
France

Dr. A. Monto
USA

Dr. G. Gabriel
Germany

ESWI's advisers

Dr. C. Hannoun
Institut Pasteur, France

Dr. F. Blasi
European Respiratory Society (ERS)

Dr. J. McElhaney
CIID, USA/Canada

Dr. A. Palache
industry liaison, The Netherlands

Dr. Pamela Logan
Pharmacists Group of the EU (PGEU)

Dr Maciek Godycki-Cwirko
World Organization of General Practitioners (WONCA)


ACTIVITIES

WHO strongly emphasizes the importance of raising the public awareness of influenza, its complications and how it can be prevented. ESWI believes that a focus on behavioural change and public health policy is indispensable to reach WHO's 75% vaccination rate objective. Therefore ESWI engages in many activities that aim to raise awareness about influenza in diverse stakeholders:

ESWI's European Influenza Conferences

ESWI's focus on communication on critical issues is reflected in the concept of the European Influenza Conferences. These meetings focus on world-class scientific advances, the programmes encompassing every aspect of influenza transmission, infection, disease, prevention and treatment. They provide the attendees with state-of-the-art knowledge on influenza, a forum for exchanging ideas and for devising new research strategies. In parallel with the scientific programme, ESWI runs a tailor-made programme for public health officials and opinion leaders in healthcare. In this way, the conferences meet dual objectives: to keep everyone up to date with the latest developments in the rapidly evolving field of influenza research, and to bring together diverse stakeholders and facilitate improved control of pandemic and epidemic influenza.

The Fourth edition of ESWI's Influenza Conference will take place in Malta from 11 until 14 September 2011.

 *Information and registration details are at*
www.eswiconference.org

Country influenza stakeholders networks

ESWI is convinced influenza control is best organized at a national level. In many countries, however, the available infrastructure and expertise is insufficient to either recognize the benefits of or to undertake this type of activity. To fill this gap, ESWI facilitates the creation of multiple national influenza networks intended to support and strengthen national public health activities.

In 2003, ESWI initiated the formation of influenza networks in Germany, Poland and Sweden. In 2007, networks were also established in Finland, Portugal and the Czech Republic. Considerable progress has now been made in combating influenza at the national levels, with individual national influenza networks implementing their locally tailored action plans. ESWI is always ready to assist the networks with its scientific and logistical expertise, and can contribute financially or support local efforts to raise funds.

Currently, ESWI is helping to develop influenza networks in Hungary, Austria, Turkey, Norway, Slovenia and Greece.

Influenza workshops for public health officials

In recent times preparations for influenza outbreaks have been confronted with major challenges, including the development of antiviral resistance, the development and licensing of vaccines for pre-pandemic storage or usage and of course the pandemic outbreak of H1N1 influenza. Public health officials need to remain on top of these developments and to constantly adapt and update national and international pandemic planning strategies. Therefore, ESWI organizes influenza workshops for public health officials to provide evidence-based and objective state-of-the-art information about these topics. The workshops are held twice a year, and attended by 30-40 key European public health officials representing over 20 different countries.

 See www.eswiworkshop.org

Support to young scientists

Young scientists are the lifeblood of the influenza field. ESWI therefore has been actively encouraging the careers of young scientists for many years:

- bi-annual course on basic laboratory techniques for influenza diagnosis, organized at the Erasmus MC in Rotterdam
- the young scientists fund: ESWI provides full funding for young scientists to participate at the ESWI Influenza Conferences. The ESWI young scientist fund is named after Professor Claude Hannoun, the first ESWI chair, and promotor of young scientists.
- the support to the bi-annual Research Conferences on Orthomyxoviruses

Young Scientists Awards for best body of work and for outstanding papers/presentations. This competition is open to all young scientists throughout the world, and is judged by an international committee spanning all of influenza.

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Communication about influenza is a core activity of ESWI and therefore several tailor-made communication tools have been developed and used over the past years.

Influenza Bulletin:

twice-yearly, offering news, editorials, in-depth scientific reviews, commentaries, etc.

e-Newsletter to Public Health officials:

issued four times a year, offering short, appealing messages, headlines and facts on epidemic influenza, pandemic preparedness and the benefits of stakeholder management.

Annual report

Regular press releases


 You can subscribe to any of the above communication tools at www.eswi.org



EDUCATIONAL TOOLS

Online influenza knowledge centre for healthcare workers

Healthcare workers play a crucial role in improving vaccination coverage rates amongst at-risk patients. To assist them, ESWI has developed an online influenza knowledge centre. It provides an extensive insight in the ins and outs of the influenza disease and presents its information in different modes and levels of expertise.

 *The online knowledge centre can be used free of charge and is to be found on www.flucentre.org*

101 Questions and Answers on Influenza

ESWI has commissioned an excellent, easy to read Q&A-style book, a major work of reference for anyone with an interest in influenza. Its multilayered structure makes it easily accessible for both the interested layperson and healthcare providers who are confronted with influenza patients in their daily practice. The book is thus part of ESWI's awareness raising strategy.

 *Available for purchase via www.eswi.org*

Online educational course on influenza

To further spread the knowledge about the impact of influenza and the available prevention strategies, ESWI has collaborated with the European Respiratory Society to produce four online lectures as part of the ERS school programme.

 *These interactive sessions have been captured and are available on www.eswi.org*

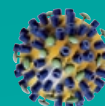
WANT TO BE KEPT INFORMED?

If you wish to be on the mailing list of the Influenza Bulletin or receive the e-newsletter for public health officials, please fill in the subscription form on www.eswi.org or send an e-mail to info@eswi.org

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