OpenWHO: a new interactive initiative to improve the response to health emergencies.

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Source: [https://openwho.org](https://openwho.org)

In a new platform, OpenWHO, WHO has recently launched a series of video courses on health emergencies geared for responders working in emergencies, that are accessible to the public as well. The strength of this platform is the capacity to transform complex scientific knowledge into simple and easy to understand lessons that are accessible everywhere. Android and iOS apps can be downloaded for connecting to this free platform. It can host an unlimited number of users and is open to anyone wishing to register.

OpenWHO has four channels:

1. **“Outbreak”**, a channel dedicated to fighting pandemics and epidemics. It currently provides a course on public health interventions in these situations (i.e. risk communication for the flu, pandemic flu preparedness, emergency responses, vaccine stockpile, geographic information system data, laboratory networks, data and information for epidemic control), a course on Ebola in French and English with basic knowledge and principles on occupational health and safety, a course dedicated to MERS, and a comprehensive course focused on 13 infectious hazards (including Ebola, MERS, Zika, the flu, etc...). All courses offer the most relevant scientific, technical and operational knowledge through video presentations and self-tests. These courses are helpful for trainers of medical workers in the field of pandemics and epidemics.

2. **“Ready for Response”**, a channel where all individuals who might be sent to countries for health responses can receive a pre-deployment training for specific outbreaks (e.g. such as Ebola), or can learn about the “Incident Management System” for emergency management and response. Participants receive basic knowledge and skills in order to mount an effective response, while reducing the risk of occupational and nosocomial infection. A learning package is also provided.

3. **“Get social”**, a channel dealing with the basic and advanced knowledge on risk communication.

4. **“GOARN (Global Outbreak Response and Alert Network)”,** a channel that provides specific knowledge on the procedure of pre-deployment.

**Comment**

OpenWho is a welcomed new initiative from WHO that offers learning opportunities, not only for WHO staff and frontline responders, but also for other healthcare workers around the world. The courses are an introduction to complex scientific knowledge presented in simple and easy to understand lessons with relevant scientific, technical and operational knowledge. The interactive format and blended teaching techniques ensure a high-quality teaching standard. The principle of making detailed pre-employment courses easily accessible can prove essential in the future response to health care emergencies.

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