



Middle East:

Center conducts training in sharps injury surveillance at WHO-sponsored conference in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Janine Jagger and Ginger Parker lectured and conducted EPINet training at a WHO-sponsored regional training workshop on healthcare worker protection in the Gulf States region. Held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from August 15-18, the conference was organized by the WHO in collaboration with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Center for Infection Control, led by Dr. Ziad Memish, as well as the International Labor Organization and NIOSH/CDC. Dr. Memish is head of infection control and prevention at King Saud Bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences in Riyadh, where the conference was held.

Conference goals included educating GCC healthcare leaders about protection of healthcare workers from occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens, and equipping them with the knowledge to develop effective policies and programs at institutional and national levels. In addition, through hands-on EPINet training, the program sought to establish a foundation for a GCC-wide sharps injury surveillance network.



Janine Jagger (middle row, left) with Gulf State colleagues attending a WHO-sponsored training workshop, "Protecting Healthcare Workers" (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; August 2009). Susan Wilburn of the WHO is to the left and behind Dr. Jagger.

Jagger commented that "the more people share experiences, the more powerful the data become.

Wilburn, RN, MPH, technical officer with the WHO's Occupational Health Programme.

"This is an extraordinary opportunity to help build a surveillance network from the ground up, in a region with limited previous activity related to healthcare worker safety."

- Janine Jagger

And data will begin to proliferate as the trainees here train others across the region."

Other presenters at the conference included Ahmed E. Gomaa, MD,ScD, MSPH, medical officer with NIOSH's Division of Surveillance Hazard Evaluation and Health Studies, and Susan

Jagger noted that the conference presented "an extraordinary opportunity to help build a sharps injury surveillance network from the ground up, in a region—the Gulf States—where previously there had been very limited activity on healthcare worker safety. We are particularly

OUR MISSION:

Setting a global standard for healthcare worker protection

Healthcare workers are a crucial resource in all countries. But in many places, they are at high risk of acquiring preventable, life-threatening occupational infections.

We believe healthcare workers everywhere should be provided with the basic protections that have been shown to prevent exposures and infections. We believe that these measures should be mandatory, and should be provided free of charge to workers:

- Hepatitis B vaccination for all healthcare workers.
- Elimination of unnecessary sharps.
- Availability of safety-engineered needles and sharp medical devices.
- Availability of basic barrier garments for blood intensive procedures.
- Post-exposure prophylaxis for all healthcare workers who sustain an occupational exposure to HIV.

grateful to Dr. Memish for being a driving force behind this work." □