

SpR Secondment to the WHO HQ Geneva January to June 2010



Dr. Ina Kelly
Department of Public Health
Tullamore

Winter Scientific Meeting 2010

Higher Specialist Training - Supervisor

Dr. Claudia Stein,
Medical
Epidemiologist,
originally from
Germany and who
trained in the UK



Claudia was the coordinator of the WHO
Initiative to Estimate the Global Burden of
Foodborne Diseases

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Claudia has taken up the post of Director,
Information, Evidence and Research at the
WHO European Headquarters in Copenhagen

WHO HQ Structure

Director-General (10)

Family and Community Health (5)

General Management (7)

Health Action in Crises (6)

Health Security and Environment (6)

Health Systems and Services (5)

HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases (4)

Innovation, Information, Evidence and Research (7)

Non-communicable Diseases and Mental Health (6)

Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses (Health Security and the Environment cluster)

Foodborne Diseases

- Burden of foodborne diseases

Foodborne Disease Burden
Epidemiology Reference Group
(FERG)



- Antimicrobial resistance

WHO Advisory Group on Integrated
Surveillance of Antimicrobial
Resistance (AGISAR)



- Foodborne Disease Surveillance

Global Foodborne
Infections Network (GFN)



- Ensuring food safety in the
aftermath of natural disasters

Five Keys to
safer food



Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses

- Food Standards -microbiological, chemical, biotechnology and nanotechnology risks assessment through **Codex Alimentarius**
- Capacity building – Codex Trust Fund etc
- Zoonoses – Development of WHO Zoonoses Strategy; Global Early Warning System for Major Animal Diseases, including Zoonoses (GLEWS); Veterinary public health (VPH)
- International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN)



My role – Project 1




- Consultant in Public Health Medicine – seconded from Ireland
- Mid-term **Evaluation** of the WHO Initiative to Estimate the Global Burden of Foodborne Diseases
 - with the view to guiding the future progress of the Initiative
- Produced a report and presented findings to dept. (Geneva June 2010) and at “FERG 4” (Geneva November 2010)



My role – Project 2


- Extensive literature review to identify the components and tools of policy situation analysis to further the knowledge translation and exchange function of the Initiative
- Produced a report and presented findings in Atlanta (March 2010)





Value of the secondment – to WHO

- **HSE and Ireland's contribution to WHO**
 - WHO depends on member state funding and Ireland considered as a donor to the Initiative
 - Relatively few PH doctors working in WHO
 - I completed two useful reports, one of which is contributing to the future development of the Initiative; and assisted other WHO colleagues with projects



Value of the secondment – to HSE

- **Knowledge**
 - Global health issues
 - Knowledge translation
 - Burden of disease
- **Skills**
 - Successfully performed evaluation of global initiative
 - Project management
 - Ways of working
- **Links with WHO**

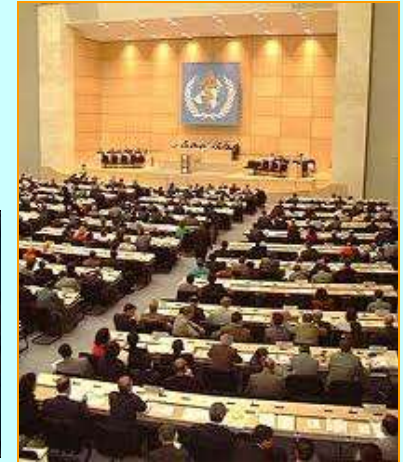
Value of the secondment – to me



- Knowledge and skills as mentioned
- Links and friendships with international experts in various areas of public health
- Opportunities to mentor others

Benefits for an SpR

- Awareness of
 - How WHO leads through its mandate - Executive Board and World Health Assembly – (Food safety resolution)
 - How WHO operates –structures and staff
- International issues and perspective
- Cross disciplinary working
- The value of English as a first language



Other benefits for an SpR



- Colleagues
- Wonderful learning in such a lovely environment
- CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research)



Challenges – practical 1

- Geneva – not very “user-friendly” despite huge international community
 - Expensive
 - Accommodation rules – 10pm!
- WHO administrative systems
 - this is a challenge for most of the staff

Challenges – practical 2

- To bring to not to bring the car? – I brought mine and it was great
- To live or not to live in Switzerland?– I chose France
- French – for contracts
- Right hand steering wheel for tolls and car parks– passenger very welcome!

Some learning points 1

- WHO role
- Importance of trusted sources & perceived conflicts of interest
- Importance of timely communication – WHO authoritative one-way communication versus interactive

Some learning points 2

- Use of burden of disease knowledge to target resources fairly and effectively
- Knowledge translation and exchange - researcher user interface
- International health
 - Public Health crosses borders
 - PH issues affect different countries differently
 - Capacity building and sustainable approaches

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