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### Recent Releases through FIP

FIP has recently passed on information developed through collaboration with other organisations. These two sets of information are important to the MEPS area of practice. Hence it was decided to send out an additional newsletter regarding these.

### WHO Information to Support Preparedness and Response to Heat-Waves

<http://www.who.int/phe/news/heat-waves/en/>

“With the recent and ongoing extreme hot weather conditions across much of the northern hemisphere, WHO urges countries to prepare for heat-waves and hot spells.

Every year the health of many people, particularly the elderly and the chronically ill, is severely affected by high temperatures. Heat can trigger exhaustion, heart attacks or confusion and can make existing conditions such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases worse. Yet the adverse health effects of hot weather are largely preventable through good public health practice, and there is much that individuals can do to protect themselves, their families and communities”.

**Resources available from the WHO website include:**

↓ [Information for the general public during heat-waves](#)  
pdf, 253kb

[Public health advice](#)

[Heat probability early warning for selected European countries](#)

[Prevention, preparedness and response to heat](#)

[Guidance on developing a heat health action plan](#)   
(available in English and Russian)

[More information on climate change and human health](#)

# ETHICAL PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH CARE IN TIMES OF ARMED CONFLICT AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

*Within the framework of the Health Care in Danger project, the World Medical Association (WMA), the International Committee of Military Medicine (ICMM), the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) were consulted by the ICRC with the aim of these organizations agreeing on a common denominator of ethical principles of health care applicable in times of armed conflict and other emergencies. The following document, which is the result of these consultations, is without prejudice to existing policy documents adopted by these organizations.*

Civilian and military health-care organizations share the common goal of improving the safety of their personnel and other health assets and the delivery of impartial and efficient health care in armed conflicts and other emergencies,

Referring to the principles of humanity, whereby human suffering shall be prevented and alleviated wherever it may be found and impartiality, whereby health care shall be provided with no discrimination;

Bearing in mind the standards of international humanitarian law, in particular the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977 Additional Protocols, and of international human rights law, specifically the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966);

Considering the principles of professional ethics adopted by health-care professional associations, including the WMA Regulations in Times of Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence;

Endorse the following ethical principles of health care:

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Ethical principles of health care do not change in times of armed conflict and other emergencies and are the same as the ethical principles of health care in times of peace.
2. Health-care personnel shall at all times act in accordance with relevant international and national law, ethical principles of health care and their conscience. In providing the best available care, they shall take into consideration the equitable use of resources.
3. The primary task of health-care personnel is to preserve human physical and mental health and to alleviate suffering. They shall provide the necessary care with humanity, while respecting the dignity of the person concerned, with no discrimination of any kind, whether in times of peace or of armed conflict or other emergencies.
4. Privileges and facilities afforded to health-care personnel in times of armed conflict and other emergencies are never to be used for purposes other than for health-care needs.
5. No matter what arguments may be put forward, health-care personnel never accept acts of torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment under any circumstances, including armed conflict or other emergencies. They must never be present at and may never take part in such acts.

## RELATIONS WITH PATIENTS

6. Health-care personnel act in the best interest of their patients and whenever possible with their explicit consent. If, in performing their professional duties, they have conflicting loyalties, their primary obligation, in terms of their ethical principles, is to their patients.
7. In armed conflict or other emergencies, health-care personnel are required to render immediate attention and requisite care to the best of their ability. No distinction is made between patients, except in respect of decisions based upon clinical need and available resources.
8. Health-care personnel respect patients' right to confidentiality. It is ethical for health-care personnel to disclose confidential information only with the patient's consent or when there is a real and imminent threat of harm to the patient or to others
9. Health-care personnel make their best efforts to ensure respect for the privacy of the wounded, sick and deceased, including avoiding the use of health care for the wounded and sick, whether civilian or military, for publicity or political purposes.

## PROTECTION OF HEALTH-CARE PERSONNEL

10. Health-care personnel, as well as health-care facilities and medical transports, whether military or civilian, must be respected by all. They are protected while performing their duties and the safest possible working environment shall be provided to them.
11. Safe access by health-care personnel to patients, health-care facilities and equipment shall not be unduly impeded, nor shall patients' access to health-care facilities and health-care personnel be unduly impeded.
12. In fulfilling their duties and where they have the legal right, health-care personnel are identified by internationally recognized symbols such as the Red Cross, Red Crescent or Red Crystal as a visible manifestation of their protection under applicable international law.
13. Health-care personnel shall never be punished for executing their duties in compliance with legal and ethical norms.

## FINAL

14. By endorsing these ethical principles of health care, the signatory organizations commit themselves to work for the promotion and implementation thereof wherever possible, including by appropriate dissemination amongst their members.



## MEPS BOARD MEMBERS 2014



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## OFFICIAL SPONSOR



MEPS is grateful for the support of Biochem in helping the Section activities progress.

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## NEWSLETTER: CONTRIBUTIONS REQUEST

Anyone who has a contribution for the newsletter - be it information about their role, requests for information or items of interest to military and emergency pharmacists - please contact the MEPS secretary: [secretary-meps@fip.org](mailto:secretary-meps@fip.org).

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