

RESCAP-MED FOURTH NEWSLETTER

RESCAP-MED

- Epidemiology
- Environmental Health
- Health Economics
- Medical Anthropology
- Health Policy Evaluation



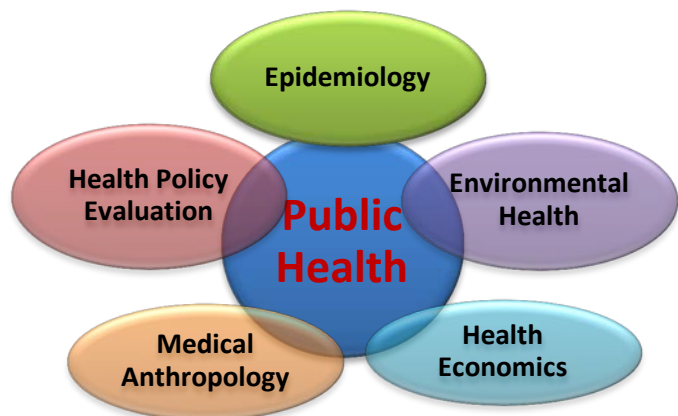
**Public
Health**

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What is RESCAP-MED?

RESCAP-MED aims to build research capacity for public health in countries around the eastern and southern Mediterranean. Its purpose is to develop research skills for the challenge of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and their social determinants: specifically the skills to address the burden of cardiovascular diseases (CVD), diabetes, and cancer.

RESCAP-MED aims to create a Mediterranean regional network for NCD researchers, in five key public health disciplines: epidemiology, health economics, environmental health, medical anthropology, and health policy evaluation.



RESCAP-MED Website

<http://research.ncl.ac.uk/rescap-med/>

RESCAP-MED workshop on Scientific Writing



Dublin, Ireland

16-18th Sept 2013

A writing workshop for publication and grant submission was held in Dublin, Ireland between 16-18 Sept 2013 and hosted by Dr Kathleen Bennett, Trinity College Dublin.

The training workshop covered the following topics: targeting a journal, getting started, analysing abstracts, writing an abstract, outlining, drafting, and dealing with feedback from reviewers. The first two days dealt with writing for publication and the final day dealt with grant writing. The 13 participants came from Turkey, Palestine, Jordan and Lebanon, and the workshop was led by Dr Bennett (TCD Dublin), Prof. Critchley (St Georges London University), Prof. Capewell and Dr O'Flaherty (Liverpool), Prof. Phillimore (Newcastle),

and Prof. Sibai (AUB Beirut). There were several interactive sessions where papers were reviewed and some writing tasks. Overall, the feedback from the course was very positive, and a second writing workshop is scheduled for 2014. Materials from this writing workshop are made available through the RESCAP-MED website.

RESCAP-MED workshop on Medical Anthropology



Prof. Sjaak van der Geest

Çeşme, İzmir, Turkey
9-12 December 2013

The workshop was held in Çeşme, İzmir, Turkey from 9-12 December 2013. It was hosted by DEU, led by Prof. Unal and Dr Kilic, and the academic programme was led by Dr. Shahaduz Zaman (Newcastle University). The workshop introduced the participants to the basic concepts of anthropology in general and medical anthropology in particular; the anthropological approach to public health; and the social and cultural realities of health and health care. The speakers explained how medical anthropologists can work as part of an integrated

multi-disciplinary research team; discussed the rationale for ethnographic and qualitative research methods used in medical anthropology; and how to apply some basic skills of ethnography in relevant contexts.

The workshop was attended by 23 participants from Turkey, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Tunisia and Lebanon.



Participants in Medical Anthropology Workshop/Izmir, Turkey
9-12 Dec 2013

Prof. Sjaak van der Geest, a medical anthropologist from the University of Amsterdam, helped to facilitate the workshop, with additional sessions led by Prof. Belkis Kumbetoğlu (Marmara University Istanbul) and Dr. Inci User (Yeditepe University Istanbul).

"I enjoyed the Medical Anthropology workshop that was held in Izmir, Turkey. The workshop was very useful, well organized and fruitful. The keynote speakers were great and have motivated us to investigate 'behind the scenes' through several activities, group discussions, and sharing experiences.

Nihaya Al-sheyab, PhD, MsN, RN



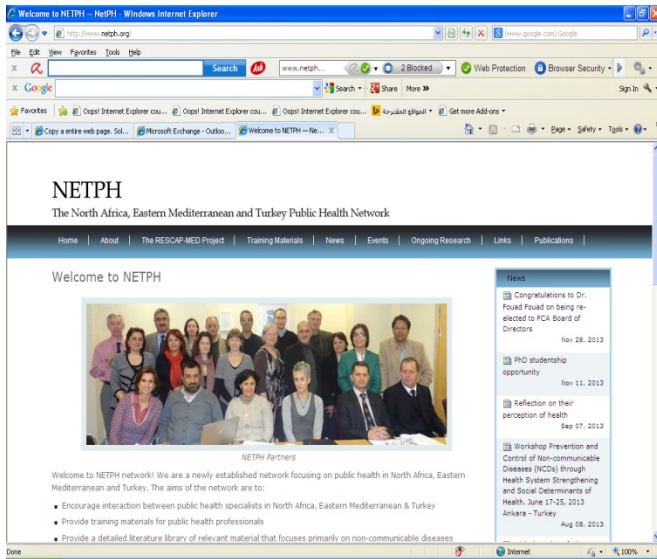
Dr Nihaya Al-Sheyab & Dr. Shahaduz Zaman

Web-based learning: NETPH

The North Africa, Eastern Mediterranean and Turkey Public Health (**NETPH**) Network website has gone live.

You can find it at:

www.netph.org



The aims of the network are to encourage interaction between public health specialists in North Africa, Eastern Mediterranean & Turkey, provide training materials for public health professionals, provide a detailed literature library of relevant material that focuses primarily on non-communicable diseases, and provide recent report and features relating to public health in the NETPH region.

NETPH was designed by the RESCAP-MED team at St Georges, University of London in 2012 as part of work package 5 of the RESCAP-MED project.

<http://research.ncl.ac.uk/rescap-med/>

RESCAP-MED Fellowship Programme: Updates

The RESCAP-MED Fellowship Programme exists to enable new skills and knowledge to be acquired by researchers within the Mediterranean partner institutions, over a longer period than is possible through workshops. Fellowships will cater for those early in their research career or those at a mid-career stage.



Dr Kathleen Bennett

Turkey: Eren Korkmaz visited Newcastle University earlier this year (April 2013) to work with Shahaduz Zaman and Peter Phillimore. Two fellowships took place after the writing course in Dublin in September 2013, one to Liverpool University (DuyguIslek) to work with Simon Capewell and Martin O’Flaherty, and another in London (CeydaSehan) to work with Julia Critchley and colleagues in London. It is expected that there will be follow-up visits for these fellowships in the New Year.

Tunisia: Faten Tlili undertook a fellowship at Newcastle University in November 2013, to work with Peter Phillimore and Shahaduz Zaman on two journal articles.

Lebanon: Christy Costanian spent 2 weeks undertaking a fellowship with Kathleen Bennett in Dublin. The purpose of this fellowship was to complete a paper on diabetes epidemiology in Lebanon, which has been submitted for publication.

Jordan: Khalid Abu Hammour is to visit Turkey and Dr Belgin Unal in Dec 2013 to obtain training in epidemiological methods. Reema Karasneh is to visit Prof Simon Capewell and Dr Martin O’Flaherty in January 20, 2014 – January 31, 2014 to undertake a fellowship at Liverpool University.

Research on CVD and Diabetes: planned Special Supplement of IJPH

A Supplement in the International Journal of Public Health is nearing completion, involving partners in the EU project which preceded RESCAP-MED – MedCHAMPS. Edited by Wasim Maziak, Julia Critchley and Shahaduz Zaman, the planned supplement is titled ‘The rising burden of non-communicable diseases in the Mediterranean region and potential solutions’. It will bring together 10-12 research papers on the individual countries (Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey) plus an editorial summarizing the results of the research presented. The papers will present a range of both quantitative and qualitative research looking at cardiovascular disease trends and policy options to reduce

What fellows are saying about RESCAP-MED fellowship program?



I was granted a fellowship under the RESCAPMED scheme at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, spanning from September 18-October 2, 2013. The main purpose of this fellowship was to obtain training on paper writing. At the end of the fellowship, I completed the writing of a paper entitled “Prevalence, correlates and management of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus in a Mediterranean country: findings from a national population-based study”. The manuscript is now in the submission process. I found this short fellowship to be of immense benefit to my skill set and career. These few weeks were truly productive; I quickly learned the components of a good paper and practiced the process of dissecting and writing the different sections of a paper and then assembling them to result in a coherent and clear article. Furthermore, “soft skills” such as critical evaluation of my written work and the ability to clearly discuss and disseminate findings were also enhanced. I was fortunate to have Dr. Kathleen Bennett as a mentor, who was most efficient in helping me utilize the short duration of this fellowship to culminate in a good draft of the paper. She was also kind enough to share with me her expertise in writing and presenting scientific data, conducting statistical analysis, and submission to journals. I am grateful for all her efforts in making my stay at Trinity a fruitful one. I consider this experience to be valuable and an asset to junior researchers like myself. I would definitely recommend it to any researcher who would like to gain or expand their research knowledge and capacities.

cardiovascular disease burden in the EMR. Submission of manuscripts started 3 months ago and the last date for submission is 31st January 2014. The supplement is expected to be published at the end of 2014.

Workshop on Environmental Health in the Mediterranean region



Dr. Balsam Ahmad

Amman, Jordan
5-9 April 2014

The workshop will be held 5-9 April 2014 in Amman, Jordan, hosted by JUST partners led by Prof. Yusuf Khader. The workshop aims to build capacity in interdisciplinary topics related to environmental health and which are particularly relevant in the region. The aims of this workshop are to:

- Introduce participants to the concepts of measuring environmental exposures, health, hazard, dose-response, risk characteristics, and environmental health impact assessment.
- Introduce participants to a range of quantitative and qualitative methods used in the assessment of environmental health.
- Enable participants to consider public perception of environmental health risks in the development

and implementation of projects, plans and policies.

- Consider and discuss three cross-cutting themes: environmental justice, sustainability and the environmental health challenges of the current political upheavals in the region, and learn lessons for policy-making and implementation.

The workshop will be led by Dr Balsam Ahmad, a specialist in environmental public health at Newcastle University, together with Professor Yousef Khader Al-Gaud from JUST, assisted by other members of the RESCAP-MED consortium plus invited speakers. The organisers intend that this workshop will attract participants from both public health and other areas of research, practice and policy related to public health (water, transport, housing, fuel/energy, food), because cross-disciplinary dialogue is at the heart of environmental health.



Prof. Yusuf Khader Al-Gaud

2nd RESCAP-MED International Symposium: Beirut

Following the success of the 1st RESCAP-MED International Symposium in Istanbul in 2013, plans are underway for holding the project's 2nd Symposium. Along with colleagues in the Faculty of Health Sciences at the American University of Beirut, Prof Abla Sibai is leading the team preparing for this event, to be held in late November 2014. The Symposium title is: 'Socio-political Transformations in the Arab World: Challenges for Non-communicable Diseases (NCD) Prevention and Control'.

The conference aims to bring together researchers, policymakers, public health actors and relief workers in order to highlight plans of action in NCD surveillance, management, control and prevention, in light of the major geo-political developments in the region. The conference will be organized by RESCAP-MED, in conjunction with the Faculty of Health Sciences-AUB and the Lebanese Epidemiological Association. The Symposium is a culmination of AUB's Faculty of Health Sciences's 60th Anniversary celebrations.



Prof. Abla Sibai

Abla Sibai is a Professor of Epidemiology and Population Health at the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) American University of Beirut (AUB), the co-founder of the University for Seniors program at AUB and the founding Director of the "Center for Studies on Aging" in Lebanon. During the past 15 years, Abla has led the way to placing NCDs and older adult issues at the forefront on the national agenda and in the region. She was the scientific coordinator of the multi-center European Commission funded research on war and health in Lebanon and Palestine, the co-PI of the Burden of Disease Study and the PI of the Nutrition and Non-communicable Disease Risk Factor Surveillance national study in Lebanon. She is a member of the World Economic Forum Council on Ageing, and a Board Member and consultant for several NGOs and Governmental agencies. She is the author of over 150 scientific papers and book chapters. Abla holds a degree in Pharmacy from AUB and a PhD in Epidemiology from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

