

Caribbean Public Health Agency

Monthly Bulletin¹

No. 7: July 2009

The convening of a CARPHA Strategic Planning Workshop in Barbados; was the main activity since the release of the last Bulletin. The Consultants meanwhile continued work on the costing of CARPHA.

Strategic Planning Workshop

As mentioned in the last Bulletin; at the 4th meeting of the CARPHA Steering Committee, it was agreed that this meeting/workshop would be held. It was convened in Barbados from the 26th -27th June, and the objectives of the meeting included the following.

- To finalise details of CARPHA functions, and to see how the current RHI functions would fit within the CARPHA framework.
- To identify those RHI activities and corresponding outputs, that do not fall within the CARPHA mandate, and to look at options for their continuance.
- To identify CARPHA's priorities and critical activities.

Prior to the workshop a data collection template was sent to each of the RHI Directors, in an attempt to determine the present functions and outputs of the RHIs; in addition to the matching of these functions to those of CARPHA. This was followed by a visit of the consultants to each of the RHIs, where further discussions were held. The results of these consultations formed the basis for discussion at the strategic planning workshop.

In determining whether or not RHI activities fell within the mandate and functions of CARPHA; the participants used the following criteria to guide them during the discussions.

- What is the risk of not carrying out a particular function? What would be the impact on Public Health if it was not done?
- Was there another entity in the Region that performs the particular function?
- Was there an advantage in having a regional initiative in a particular area? Would a regional initiative add value? Would a regional initiative ensure a more even distribution of services?
- Was it a country need? Was regional leadership required in a particular area?

¹ This and previous bulletins may be found on the CARICOM and PAHO websites: www.caricom.org and www.paho.org

Participants were also reminded that the Director of PAHO had given the assurance that PAHO would continue to support those activities of CFNI, which are not included within CARPHA's functions. However during the workshop, it was agreed that the overwhelming majority of RHI activities, and outputs were covered within the CARPHA functions.

In addition the staff competencies that would be required for CARPHA were discussed and determined in relation to its various functions. The need for the development of a comprehensive transition strategy and plan was also discussed.

Costing of CARPHA

The consultants have indicated that with the additional information obtained from the strategic planning workshop, they are now on schedule to complete the draft final report on the costing by the end of July.

Update on CARPHA to 13th Meeting of Conference of Heads of Government

An update on CARPHA was presented to the Heads of Government of CARICOM; including the timetable for its implementation. The latter was approved in principle by the Heads, who also thanked the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for its offer to host CARPHA's Headquarters. In addition they advised that the transition plan should ensure minimal dislocation to current public functions of the RHIs.

Discussions with the UK Department of Public health

Discussions with representatives of the UK Department of Health; regarding possible areas of technical assistance for CARPHA are planned for later this month.

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