

## Health services for Syrian refugees in Turkey

*As part of the whole-of-Syria approach, the WHO Country Office in Turkey and its field office in Gaziantep have delivered the following support.*

**Primary care.** Turkey's Ministry of Health continues to hire Syrian health staff living in Turkey to work in health facilities that serve refugees. From May to July 2017, Turkey has employed 420 Syrian health professionals after they completed a joint WHO - Ministry of Health training programme.

Through the programme, Syrian doctors and nurses become qualified to work within the Turkish health system. They take one week of classroom work and six weeks of training on-the-job in refugee clinics. Four groups were trained between January and July 2017, and a fifth started in early July 2017.

**Laboratory testing.** To support efforts in surveillance and laboratory testing for diseases such as influenza, WHO trained Syrian doctors to use an RNA/DNA testing machine available in the Reference Laboratory in Ankara.

Once trained, these doctors will be able to use similar technologies with a machine that WHO has provided to a laboratory in Syria. The device currently tests samples for different types of influenza and is expected in future also to cover also other diseases, such as measles and mumps.



*Syrian doctors learn how to use an RNA/DNA testing machine in a reference laboratory in Ankara during a WHO training session.*

*Photo: Naser Mahewish*

### Best practice in refugee and migrant health.

In mid-July, the WHO Country Office in Turkey presented its flagship Refugee Health Programme at a WHO Regional Office for Europe Summer School on Refugee and Migrant Health, attended by representatives of governments, nongovernmental organizations, United Nations agencies and academia from 30 countries worldwide. Bringing qualified Syrian health staff into Turkey's workforce was identified as a best practice in the area of refugee health. The Turkey's Ministry of Health also shared valuable joint experiences and lessons learned.

*The Turkey Country Office of the World Health Organization's Regional Office for Europe serves the health needs of families in northern Syria as well as Syrian refugees living in Turkey.*



#### Syrian health staff trained in January-July 2017

- Staff who completed classroom training.
- Staff who completed on-the-job training.

### Funding

As of July 2017, WHO has received US\$ 12.5 million from donors to help Syrian refugees in Turkey since the beginning of the Syrian crisis.

### Donors

As of July 2017, WHO programmes in Turkey are funded by European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration of the United States Department of State, and the governments of the People's Republic of China, Kuwait and Norway.



## Health services for northern Syria

As part of the whole-of-Syria approach, the WHO Country Office in Turkey and its field office in Gaziantep have delivered the following support.

### Responding to an outbreak of polio-myelitis (polio).

To fight a polio outbreak in northeast Syria, the WHO whole-of-Syria team shipped monovalent type-2 oral polio vaccines to the area of Deir ez Zor and oversaw the vaccination of about 260 000 children in the second half of July 2017. The WHO team also supported third-party monitoring of the vaccination campaign in the area to make sure to reach as many children as possible. Monitoring teams asked parents whether their children had been vaccinated and if not, what had prevented them. A second campaign is planned for August 2017. The WHO Field Office in Gaziantep also keeps coordinating the collection of samples to be tested for polio by a laboratory in Turkey.

**Chemical exposure preparedness.** WHO held a specialized, week-long training course for Syrian health staff to teach them how to decontaminate and treat patients suffering from chemical exposure.

**Medical supplies.** WHO shipped to northern Syria trauma kits, surgical instruments, rapid testing kits for cholera, medicines and other supplies worth US\$ 238 685 to northern Syria. These supplies will help provide more than 450 000 treatments to 183 health facilities in Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, and Latakia.

**Routine vaccination.** More than 35 health centres in northern Syria, whose routine vaccination programmes had been disrupted by conflict, have this year restarted immunization against measles, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, hepatitis B and Haemophilus influenza.

**Training.** WHO trained more than 200 Syrian doctors, nurses and data entry workers in using standardizing disease names according to the WHO International Classification of Diseases, 10th edition. Training courses were held for the staff of nine health facilities in northern Syria, including three mobile clinics and a hospital that is now located in a cave to protect it from airstrikes.



Syrian doctors practise decontamination of a patient during a drill at a training course in the WHO Field Office in Gaziantep, Turkey. Photo: WHO/Sheahan

“I learned a lot about decontamination. I am in charge of an ambulance service. I am going to train all our paramedics in this.”

*Dr Wissam Zakaria, trainee on a chemical exposure course.*



## Funding

As of July 2017, WHO has received US\$ 12.6 million out of a total of US\$ 63 million needed for its work in northern Syria in 2017.

## Donors

As of July 2017, WHO programmes in northern Syria are funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, the Department of International Development (United Kingdom), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs pooled funds, and the governments of China, Japan, Kuwait and Norway.