



14046

Consultation on the Assessment of the Relation
of Common Risk Factors with Mortality and
Development of Relevant Risk Assessment Methods

Heidelberg, 3-5 December 1987

EUR/ICP/HST 112(S)
4396N
12 April 1988
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SUMMARY REPORT

The meeting was held jointly with the European Risk and Incidence - A Collaborative Analysis Study (ERICA) Coordination and Advisory Group. Nine participants from seven countries, mainly experts in epidemiology, attended the meeting as well as staff members from WHO headquarters and the Regional Office for Europe.

This was the first Consultation in the framework of a new project launched to spread awareness of the existing knowledge about the relationship between common risk factors and the risk of major noncommunicable diseases, as well as to encourage the application of this knowledge.

The general aims of the project are:

- to facilitate the access to and use of existing epidemiological knowledge on the contribution of the main risk factors of noncommunicable diseases to morbidity and mortality; and
- on the basis of pooled data from studies conducted in different countries, to develop methods of risk assessment for use in health planning, to facilitate the modelling of expected trends of mortality if the levels of certain risk factors in the population are to be modified.

The existing epidemiological data and obstacles to their use were discussed. It was agreed that the existing findings on the possible contribution of known risk factors such as smoking, hypertension, obesity and high levels of cholesterol to morbidity and mortality from noncommunicable diseases are not being fully applied, particularly in the detailed planning of preventive activities and the modelling and analysis of expected reductions in morbidity and mortality. The main reasons why the relevant epidemiological knowledge is not widely enough known and used are that the relevant findings are fragmented and dispersed among a large number of single epidemiological studies, with a consequent decrease in their significance, and that the data usually appear in a form not ready for application.

SUMMARY REPORTS are issued by the Regional Office in English, French, German and Russian, but may be reproduced, or translated into any other language, providing due acknowledgement is made.

Les RAPPORTS SOMMAIRES sont publiés par le Bureau régional en allemand, anglais, français et russe, mais ils peuvent être reproduits, ou traduits dans n'importe quelle autre langue, à condition que la source soit dûment mentionnée.

KURZBERICHTE werden vom WHO-Regionalbüro in Deutsch, Englisch, Französisch und Russisch herausgegeben. Nachdruck oder Übersetzung in andere Sprachen mit Quellenangabe gestattet.

КРАТКИЕ ОТЧЕТЫ издаются Региональным бюро на английском, немецком, русском и французском языках, но могут быть размножены или переведены на любой другой язык при наличии соответствующего уведомления.

Support was given to integrating dispersed epidemiological data; making them more accessible, significant and convincing for use; and putting them into a form ready for application in health planning, particularly in planning for the prevention of noncommunicable diseases.

To avoid the duplication of data collected from a large number of studies, collaboration and involvement with international projects already in possession of significant amounts of pooled data was highly recommended. The participants agreed that the WHO ERICA project was most suitable to serve as the basis for the further development of the new project. It was recommended to extend the present ERICA project and to use its updated multistudy data base both to implement the original aim of the project and to support the development of the new project on the assessment of the relationship between common risk factors and the development of relevant risk assessment methods.