



COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL SURVEILLANCE
OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Geneva, 30 November - 5 December 1970

DISEASES UNDER SURVEILLANCE

Preparation of a technical manual on surveillance of selected diseases

As requested by resolutions WHA22.47 and WHA22.48 adopted by the World Health Assembly in July 1969, a technical manual on surveillance has been under preparation. The general principles of epidemiological surveillance will be outlined for the nine selected diseases covered by the resolutions. These include the four diseases under the Regulations as from 1 January 1971 (smallpox, yellow fever, cholera and plague) and five diseases "under international surveillance" (louse-borne typhus, louse-borne relapsing fever, influenza, paralytic poliomyelitis, malaria).

A committee has been responsible for the preparation of the manual. Their efforts are available as a draft working paper for consideration by this Committee. As surveillance programmes expand and experience is gained, it will be possible to place other diseases under surveillance. Future revisions and additions to the manual will be necessary.

The manual should serve as a guide, bridging the period when international control of communicable diseases was considered to have an inherent police or legalistic aspect, to the new approach where scientific and technical data obtained from surveillance programmes in co-operation with all Member States will make it possible to combat infection at its source.

The manual cannot satisfy each and every reader of a diverse world-wide audience. Emphasis has therefore been placed on serving public health administrators and epidemiologists concerned with communicable disease control in the developing countries. The manual is intended to assist them in developing their own guide lines based on the prevailing epidemiological situation and available health resources. The manual should not be considered a complete and exhaustive treatise on the diseases included. It only sets forth major concepts and principles for undertaking an investigation, expanding the horizons of the reader beyond his speciality or restricted field of knowledge and providing him with leads of further sources of detailed information. Above all it is intended to be readily available when needed in the course of daily operational activities. Careful consideration of these varying needs and purposes have guided the committee responsible for the preparation of the manual in the decision regarding its content, format, length and attention to detail.

The issue of this document does not constitute formal publication. It should not be reviewed, abstracted or quoted without the agreement of the World Health Organization. Authors alone are responsible for views expressed in signed articles.

Ce document ne constitue pas une publication. Il ne doit faire l'objet d'aucun compte rendu ou résumé ni d'aucune citation sans l'autorisation de l'Organisation Mondiale de la Santé. Les opinions exprimées dans les articles signés n'engagent que leurs auteurs.