What is a Mass Gathering?

Mass gatherings are events attended by a sufficient number of people to strain the planning and response resources of a community, state, province, or nation. These can include small and medium events.

**Types of MGs**
- Mass gatherings
  - Spontaneous (e.g., Pope's funeral)
  - Planned
    - Recurrent events different locations (e.g., Olympic Games)
    - One-off events (e.g., Royal Wedding)
  - Events at different locations (e.g., Olympic Games, World Cups, World Youth Day)
  - Events at same location (e.g., Wimbledon, Hajj)

Primary Activities of the UW Collaborating Center

- Training, tools and resources for mass gatherings in low resource settings
- Planning for medical countermeasures (drugs, vaccines, mass dispensing) of mass gatherings
- Public health emergency communications
- Operational research guidance for small to medium sized mass gatherings
- Mass casualty events in low resource settings

WHO Network of Collaborating Centers on Mass Gatherings

- CCs work in collaboration with WHO HQ, Regional and Country Offices, and others to promote health as area of planning for MGs
- CCs act as repository for best practices and adapt tools where necessary to the local/regional context
- Each CC contributes to the development of tools for health preparedness within the network according to the area of focus.
- Maintain a roster of regional experts in the focus area that can provide assistance to or be deployed to any MG event

WHO Collaborating Centers

Health Challenges Posed by Mass Gatherings

- Mass Gatherings put pressures on both acute care and public health systems
  - Introduction of public health threats, both infectious and non-infectious
  - Health systems are stretched to surge capacity including impact on acute care service levels
  - Require inter-sectoral approaches to risk mitigation across disciplines/ministries
  - Communication can be difficult in international settings with varying languages, cultures, geopolitical issues, etc.
  - Often limited or no additional resources to deal with public health threat
  - May include intense media scrutiny

Examples of Assistance and Resources Available for Mass Gatherings

**Guidelines:**
- Communicable Disease Alert and Response for Mass Gatherings: Key Considerations (2008)

**Tailored support:**
- Resource material and risk assessments
- Training programs

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