The series of webinars organized through the Network has continued during the first half of 2022. In February 2022 a webinar was held to introduce the recently published second edition of the “WHO Human Health Risk Assessment Toolkit: Chemical Hazards”. The revised Toolkit and the updates for new developments and methodologies was presented. Some Network participants from developing countries also described their experiences with using the Toolkit for training. In June 2022 a webinar was held to launch the translations of the WHO publication “Manual for investigating suspected outbreaks of illnesses of possible chemical etiology” into French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic. The webinar described how to investigate an outbreak of illness where it was suspected that the cause may be the result of exposure to an environmental pollutant, toxin or contaminant. Recordings and slides from these webinars are available to Network focal points.

Under the umbrella of the Network Community of Trainers, a series of three webinars was convened covering the topic of how to design different types of training in chemical risk assessment. These principles of training design were applicable to all type of training, virtual and in-person and long or short events. Three webinars were held - in November, February and March. The first covered identifying target audience, developing learning outcomes and identifying resource needs. The second covered different types of training and how to identify and select suitable teaching materials. The third webinar covered choosing a suitable format for training, assessment methods and how to collect and evaluate participant feedback.
News from the Network Secretariat

As Network participants know, the Secretariat for the Network is based in the Chemical Safety and Health Unit at WHO Headquarters. Earlier this year two longstanding colleagues in the Unit took early retirement and have left the organization to pursue new adventures. Recruitment for new staff is underway but in the meantime the remaining three professional staff in the Unit have had to focus on urgent and time sensitive work. This means some Network activities have had to be placed on hold for the moment. We look forward to welcoming new colleagues to the Unit later in 2022. One secretariat activity that is taking place at the moment is the renewal process. Focal points for institutions due for renewal should look out for their letter inviting their institution to renew their participation in the Network.

Latest Publications

WHO Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality
The WHO “Guidelines for drinking-water quality” provide authoritative guidance for a broad range of chemicals of potential health concern in drinking-water, along with other aspects of drinking-water quality. The latest update to the 4th edition of the WHO Guidelines has been published, incorporating the 1st and 2nd addenda. Key updates in this latest version of the Guidelines include updated or new chemical risk assessments with accompanying management advice for asbestos, chromium, cyanotoxins, manganese, tetrachloroethene and trichloroethene. Network participants were previously invited to peer review the background documents for some of these chemical contaminants.

https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240045064

Latest IARC Monographs

The IARC Monographs identify environmental factors that can increase the risk of cancer. IARC Monograph Volume 127 evaluated the carcinogenicity of some aromatic amines and related compounds, mainly chemicals used in the synthesis of dyes and pigments but also used in rubber-processing or as a reagent to separate and precipitate metals. Ortho-anisidine and ortho-anisidine hydrochloride, ortho-nitroanisole, and aniline and aniline hydrochloride were classified as “probably carcinogenic to humans” (Group 2A). Cupferron was classified as “possibly carcinogenic to humans” (Group 2B).

IARC Monograph Volume 127 - Some aromatic amines and related compounds - https://publications.iarc.fr/599

In IARC Monograph Volume 128, the High Production Volume chemical acrolein was concluded to be “probably carcinogenic to humans” (Group 2A), while arecoline and crotonaldehyde were concluded to be “possibly carcinogenic to humans” (Group 2B).


IARC Monograph Volume 129 evaluated the carcinogenicity of three dyes and their precursors. Gentian violet, leucomalachite green, and CI Direct Blue 218 were concluded to be “possibly carcinogenic to humans” (Group 2B). Leucogentian violet and malachite green were “not classifiable as to their carcinogenicity to humans” (Group 3).

IARC Monograph Volume 129 - Gentian Violet, Leucogentian Violet, Malachite Green, Leucomalachite Green, and CI Direct Blue 218 - https://publications.iarc.fr/603