

The Role of Airlines in Public Health Emergencies of International Concern.

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: The International Airlines Transportation Association (IATA) reported 4.3 billion travelers, the equivalent of more than half the world's population flew safely on 46.1 million flights in 2018. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) revealed that present trends in air transport suggest passenger numbers could double to 8.2 billion in 2037. The latest update to IATA's 20-Year Air Passenger Forecast, shows that an increasing shift Eastwards in the center of gravity of the industry is behind the continued strong growth. The aviation industry not only moves people but has the potential of moving disease. This was proven by the recent outbreaks of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2002-2003; Influenza H1N1 in 2009-2010 and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Corona Virus (MERS-Cov) in 2012. These outbreaks not only cause loss of lives but had a global economic impact. To mitigate these risks, emergency preparedness is essential. Article 14 of the Chicago Convention provides the guidelines on preventing spread of disease by air transport. Post SARS, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) established a Cooperative Arrangement of for the prevention of Spread of Communicable Disease through Air Travel (CAPSCA) in 2006. This cooperative arrangement involves the aviation sectors and the health sectors with participation by many interested parties. The reference documents for CAPSCA are the ICAO Annexes and the World Health Organization, International Health Regulations 2005. (IHR 2005). **DISCUSSION:** Airlines must adhere to the policies and procedures that are established through this arrangement to prevent spread of disease.

KEYWORDS: airlines, emergency preparedness, air travellers

Air Transportation and Health Challenges: When Diseases Travelled First Class

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Everyday all over the world people boards whether the commercial airlines or private aircraft travelling to various destinations across the globe. As for 2017 International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) documented a record breaking 4.1 billion people waiting in line, check in and going through security check to board a plane. March 2018 posted 202, 157 commercials, cargo and personal flights that take-off and landing in a single day, the highest number in 2018 equivalent to 140 planes taking of every minute somewhere around the globe. The convenient of air travel somehow introduces great challenges to the global health especially in the control of diseases where they no longer confine to its original location and geographical demarcation. Diseases that have been eradicated decades ago in certain countries started to re-emerge once again with bigger threats due to lack of awareness and preparation. Some common diseases in one country become exotic in another part of the world due to quick passage of spread and transmission through air transportation. Both passenger and cargo aircraft have proven to be vectors of disease in that they transport humans, mosquitoes, and other insects and animals who, in turn, transmit disease. Transmission to other passengers has occurred with tuberculosis and influenza. Vectors for yellow fever, malaria, and dengue have been identified on aircraft. Passengers were also exposed to hazards of flight in the form of reduced atmospheric pressure and available oxygen, noise and vibration. These factors may predispose some passengers with limited physiological tolerance to develop certain cardiovascular, pulmonary and neuropsychiatric problems that may lead to inflight medical emergencies. **CONCLUSION:** Although there are numerous health issues associated with air travel, they pale in comparison to the enormous benefits to the traveller, to commerce, to international affairs, and to the public's health.

Keyword: air transportation, infectious disease, travelers