**Concept Note**

**Virtual Conference on Migration Health Impacts of the Pandemic**

**BACKGROUND**

*In November 2019 the RCM Vice-Ministers approved a third Migration Health Workshop co-sponsored by Canada and Costa Rica, to be held in mid-2020. The first two RCM Migration Health workshops, held in September 2016 and March 2019, showed great value in connecting experts in health and immigration for information sharing, networking and open discussion of cross-cutting issues.*

*There was consensus among participants on the importance of holding regular encounters to ensure timely updates on new developments related to migration health and lessons learned.*

*The next Workshop, titled Migration Health in the Americas, aims to open participation to member states of the South American Conference on Migration (SACM) and the Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC) to expand knowledge sharing in three priority areas: responses to infectious disease outbreaks, health interventions in mass irregular movements, and mental health of migrants and front-line workers.*

*The 2020 Workshop was put on hold due to the pandemic, with tentative plans to reschedule in early 2022 in Costa Rica as a hybrid event as the global situation improves. However, there was consensus among the Workshop co-sponsors, the Presidency Pro-Tempore of the RCM and the Executive Secretariat that this delay would represent a significant time lapse from the usual two years between workshops.*

**JUSTIFICATION**

*The rapid evolution of the Covid-19 pandemic, the need to adjust responses and prepare for protracted migration health measures, and the limitations to in-person participation imposed by current travel restrictions across the region, led the Workshop organizers and the PPT of the RCM to conclude that all countries could benefit from a meeting focused specifically on the pandemic's migration health impacts as a preamble to the event of 2022.*

*Considering the growing experience of the RCM with virtual events, it was agreed that the optimum format to ensure sustained engagement among participants would be a Virtual Conference of approximately 7-8 hours divided over two days. Based on the RCM calendar of activities for 2021 and the availability of expected key participants, agreement has been reached by the co-sponsors, the RCM PPT and the Executive Secretariat to hold this Virtual Conference on Migration Health Impacts of the Pandemic on October 13th and 14th, 2021.*

**GOALS**

* *Bringing together migration officials and health experts from across the Americas to update and share their knowledge, recent experiences and lessons learned related to migration and health in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. This will help all participating countries and organizations to improve and strengthen their responses to the ongoing pandemic and preparedness for future health emergencies.*
* *Sharing presentations and best practices and prompting an open discussion on the pandemic's evolution across the region, planning and preparedness, lessons learned from international flows on health measures, interventions for migrant persons and refugees, and strategic considerations for framing future migration health policies and measures.*
* *Making available to all participants the event presentations and a final report, to share knowledge of policies and programs in place, as well as conclusions and findings resulting from the event.*

**METHODOLOGY**

*The presentations and discussions will be spread across four blocks over two days, 13-14 October, as per the proposed Agenda outlined at the end of this Concept Note.*

*Presentations and attendance will be sought from the health and migration sectors of RCM Member Countries, countries of the South American Conference on Migration and the Caribbean Migration Consultations, as well as RCM observer organizations.*

*The Virtual Conference will be carried out through the Protection Working Group of the RCM, with the support of Costa Rica, Canada and the Executive Secretariat for its organization, coordination, and subsequent distribution of content.*

*A formal notice will go out in September with a draft Agenda and additional details, inviting participation and expressions of interest to present. This will give everyone approximately two months for country Focal Points and participating organizations to identify the most appropriate participants and to prepare content.*

*The event would be moderated by the RCM ES and a Canadian representative, who in turn will work with Costa Rica, the PPT and the Protection Working Group to prepare the final report after the event. Materials delivered during the event will be made available to all participants.*

**PARTICIPANTS PROFILE**

*In keeping with the technical nature of exchanges consistent with all RCM Migration Health workshops, participation will be open to working and decision-making level representatives from the health and migration sectors of Member Countries, without requiring participation from political levels. Participation of at least two representatives will be sought from RCM Member Countries, countries of the South American Conference on Migration, the Caribbean Migration Consultations, as well as the Pan-American Health Organization, RCM observer organizations and the RNCOM.*

**PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

*The proposed structure is as follows:*

* *Four blocks of approximately 1.5 hours each, with two blocks per day.*
* *Approximately 4 presentations of about 15 minutes for each block.*
* *A half-hour space for questions, answers, and discussion at the end of each block.*

*Block themes:*

* *Covid-19 epidemiology, global and regional impacts.*
* *Experiences and responses - Migrant populations, refugees and cross-border flows.*
* *Country experiences and responses - Health management in international mobility (tactical changes and measures).*
* *Experiences and responses - Health security in migration management and migration flows (strategic policies and changes).*

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**Regional Conference on Migration**

**Virtual Conference**

**MIGRATION HEALTH IMPACTS OF THE PANDEMIC**

**13 - 14 Octubre/October 2021**

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| **Primer Día / First Day** | | |
| ***20 m.*** | **Bienvenida - Palabras inaugurales/ Welcome - Opening remarks**  PPT (MEX), CRI, CAN, SECRM/RCMES | |
| ***1.5 hr*** | **Covid-19 - Epidemiología, impacto global y regional / Covid-19 Epidemiology, global and regional impacts**  Posibles ponentes / Possible presenters: OPS/PAHO, US CDC, OIM/IOM, SSa México  Presentaciones / Presentations: max. 20 min. c.u./each   * Puntos principales de interés / Key issues of interest:   + Epidemiología global y regional de la pandemia / Global and regional epidemiology of the pandemic   + Estrategias y coordinaciones globales y regionales /Global and regional strategies and coordination   + Impactos en los movimientos migratorios y transfronterizos / Impact on migration and cross-border movements * Preguntas, respuestas y discusión / Questions, answers and discussion | |
| **Break / Pausa - 20 min.** | | |
| ***1.5 hr*** | **Experiencias y respuestas - Poblaciones migrantes, refugiados y flujos transfronterizos / Experiences and responses - Migrants, refugees and cross-border flows**   * Ponentes por definir / Presenters to be determined (5-6, max. 10 min c.u./each) * Puntos principales de interés / Key issues of interest:   + Epidemiología, impactos y prestación de servicios / Epidemiology, impacts and service delivery   + Poblaciones vulnerables y con necesidades específicas de protección / Vulnerable and special protection needs populations   + Movimientos masivos irregulares (caravanas de Centroamérica, éxodo venezolano) / Mass irregular movements (Central American caravans, Venezuelan exodus)   + Lecciones aprendidas y planes a futuro / Lessons learned and future plans   Preguntas, respuestas y discusión / Questions, answers and discussion | |
| **Segundo Día / Second Day** | | |
| ***2 hr*** | | **Experiencias y respuestas de países - Gestión de salud en la movilidad internacional (medidas tácticas) / Country experiences and responses - Health management in international mobility (tactical measures)**   * Países ponentes por definir / Presenting countries to be determined * 5-6, max. 15 min c.u./each * Puntos principales de interés / Key issues of interest:   + Desafíos, impactos y soluciones / Challenges, impacts and solutions   + Lecciones aprendidas, mejores prácticas y planes a futuro / Lessons learned, best practices and future plans * Preguntas, respuestas y discusión / Questions, answers and discussion |
| **Break / Pausa - 20 min.** | | |
| ***1.5 hr*** | | **Experiencias y respuestas - seguridad sanitaria en la gestión migratoria y movimientos migratorios (cambios y políticas estratégicas) / Experiences and responses - health security in migration management and migration flows (strategic policies and changes)**   * Ponentes por definir / Presenters to be determined (5-6, max. 10 min c.u./each) * Puntos principales de interés / Key issues of interest:   + Desafíos y lecciones aprendidas / Challenges and lessons learned   + Cambios institucionales y medidas a futuro / Forward-looking measures and institutional changes * Preguntas, respuestas y discusión / Questions, answers and discussion |
| ***~20 m*** | | **Observaciones y Conclusiones y Clausura / Conclusions and Findings** |
|  | | **Clausura / Closing**  **Canadá, Costa Rica, PPT México / Canada, Costa Rica, PPT Mexico** |
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