

MOH leadership

Mr. James K. Haveman arrived here Sunday to fulfill the role as Principal Advisor for Health to Ambassador Bremer, Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq.

Haveman will coordinate the integration of all efforts to establish a functioning health delivery system for the Iraqi people. He will also serve as the Senior Advisor to the Iraqi Ministry of Health, a position held by Senior (interim) Advisor to the Ministry of Health since hostilities ended, Mr. Stephen Browning.

Haveman said, "I'm counting on Stephen [Browning] and his team to introduce me to the key players and to keep the momentum moving forward."

"Stephen will continue to provide an important role as part of our advisory capacity to the health ministry. We've made great progress, but we have much more to do," Haveman said.

Public health

A national immunization day on June 22 will resume required immunizations and continue on a monthly basis. We're working with UNICEF and MOH to develop an education and public information campaign for parents on vaccines.

Prevention of diarrheal disease, is the primary focus for the MOH Public health team. The first step involves ensuring adequate chlorination of water supplies,

provision of tablets for home chlorination and supplying containers for safe storage of water. At the same time, there will be a major education and public information campaign for health professionals and parents on early recognition and treatment.

Vector-borne diseases, such as malaria and leishmaniasis, will be controlled by a program of insecticide spraying, followed by resumption of the regular twice yearly spraying program.

We're working with USAID and the Ministry of Agriculture on a food fortification program (vitamin D supplementation for bread)

Our other priorities include refurbishing public health laboratories, improving TB treatment and restoring the capability for epidemiological surveillance to track the spread of disease and take rapid action as needed.

Security

Monday, 125 individuals began a security training program to include non-lethal forms of response for key health facilities in Baghdad. Trainees will serve as the Ministry of Health Facilities Protective Service. Plans are to expand this initiative to all healthcare facilities throughout the country.

Reconstruction of health facilities

MOH immediate priorities include the Ministry of Health building in central Baghdad and the repair or replacement of emergency electricity generators.

As soon as physical security can be assured we'll begin refurbishment/reconstruction of healthcare facilities.

Pharmaceuticals and medical supplies

MOH and NGO representatives meet **8:00 a.m.** tomorrow for a **Pharmaceutical Distribution Meeting at the Kamadia #1 warehouse** to begin development of a new pharmaceutical distribution plan.

In the meantime, Emergency measures have already been initiated to restore the flow of drugs and medical supplies from the warehouses of Kimadia (the national supply organization) to hospitals and clinics throughout the country. In the very short term, this will be centrally driven, but supplies will be increasingly informed by local perceptions of supply shortages.

For the immediate future, pharmaceuticals and other medical supplies distributed through Kimadia will be

provided to hospitals for drugs free of charge. Patients who are prescribed pharmaceuticals by doctors in public hospitals or health centers will receive them at no charge.

Supplies from Kimadia to private health clinics have also resumed at cost.

For the longer term, a radical overhaul of the Kimadia organization, introducing stock control systems at local and national level and balancing the purchasing of new stocks to the expressed requirements of local healthcare facilities.

International aid

Establishment of a simple and swift mechanism to consider proposals for international aid, to ensure that they meet the priority healthcare needs of the people of Iraq without either overlap or gaps. Where necessary, donors will be invited to modify proposals to meet the need more effectively.

A limited role for medical evacuation of patients to healthcare outside Iraq, where there is an urgent need and the treatment required is not available inside Iraq.

Payment of salaries for healthcare workers

The MOH financial team has developed simple arrangements for payment of healthcare workers, using the interim national salary scale, while

ensuring full accountability for the funds disbursed.

For the longer term, the team is developing of a salary policy for healthcare workers, which will help to motivate and retain staff in all professional groups without placing excessive strain on the developing Iraqi economy.

Other financial issues

A temporary charges "holiday", with no charges to patients for drugs and a standard consultation charge within the public healthcare system of 250 dinars. Other charges subject to review.

For the longer term, a national debate on the best ways of funding a healthcare system which will provide access of basic healthcare for all at affordable prices, with a strong emphasis on public health and primary healthcare; and which will promote excellence and quality in healthcare provision.

Military medicine

Iraqi former military doctors will work alongside civilian doctors under the control of the Ministry of Health until resolution on the re-establishment of the Iraqi military.

Women's Health

Studies have identified health issues for Iraqi women including: high incidence of anemia, low birth weight and high mortality in pregnancy.

International researchers and those in the health professions in Iraq and worldwide taking an interest are collecting information.

We're also engaging women in discussion about representation and management posts in Interim Director General Posts and in representing professional health groups on Interim Hospital Boards Opportunities to sit on interim Iraqi Administration

Women, who are already in key positions of influence in health, are giving support to the initiative.

Next Steps:

Strategy for forwarding women's health issues being drawn up in discussion with Iraqi women

Events calendar:

June 12th Pharmaceutical Distribution Meeting (8:00 a.m. at the Kamadia #1 warehouse)

June 22nd Iraqi National Vaccine Day

June 23rd - 24th International Donor Conference in New, York. (Iraqi Reps from each ministry will attend)

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