



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



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CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS OF THE PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION

1. Introduction

The Pan American Health Organization will mark its 100th anniversary in 2002. The year offers all Member States and the Secretariat the opportunity to celebrate health successes achieved together over the last century and to commit to greater awareness and concern for health during this new century and millennium. The Secretariat will undertake a limited number of regional activities and will work with the Member States to set up events that celebrate and highlight the centennial.

2. Target Audiences

The Secretariat has identified the following audiences toward which events celebrating the centennial should be targeted:

- The general public
- The health sector
- Scientific and academic communities
- PAHO staff

3. Regional Plans

PAHO staff throughout the Region selected a logo to mark the Centennial and a slogan: Celebrating 100 Years of Health. The Secretariat has identified the following key dates that should be highlighted regionally in 2002: World Health Day on 7 April, the Pan American Sanitary Conference on 23-27 September (dates subject to the approval of the Executive Committee) and the actual anniversary on 2 December 2002.

The Director of PAHO will designate a Centennial Board, which will consist of 10–15 internationally recognized persons who will advise the Director on centennial activities, carry key messages about health, and support the Organization’s goals. The Secretariat is also proposing to designate “Champions for Health,” who will be well recognized persons in the countries and the Region who can transmit health messages, promote health, and serve as role models. Another proposal is to recognize “Health Heroes,” who will be individuals that have made significant contributions to health in their countries and the Region.

The Secretariat will prepare videos, radio spots and programs, printed matter, and other materials that will be distributed throughout the Region and that will reach a broad audience. Scientific and technical conferences sponsored by the Secretariat and partner organizations will also mark the centennial and will reach the health, scientific, and academic communities. The focus of events will be on achievements in health that have resulted from a century of Pan-Americanism and on programs that will promote the two principles under which the Organization operates: equity and Pan-Americanism.

4. Country Plans

Many representatives have already begun to propose and plan events that can take place in Member States. Such events may include poster and essay contests, journalism awards, special health honors, walks or runs, special panels, commemorative stamps, cultural programs, conferences at universities, special concerts, and interviews. The Secretariat will be preparing guidelines and suggestions about the types of events that can be undertaken and will be sharing ideas among the country offices and PAHO centers. Under consideration is to ask all countries to set aside one day in which a specific “health action” will take place throughout the Hemisphere.

The Secretariat is endorsing the creation of national committees made up of nationally prominent individuals who would work with the PAHO/WHO Representatives in the countries to plan and undertake events celebrating the centennial.

5. Next Steps

The Secretariat is seeking the participation and commitment of all Member States to celebrate the PAHO centennial. This document was presented to the 126th session of the Executive Committee. Additional comments and suggestions of the 42nd Directing Council would be welcome, especially on how Member States can promote the centennial, participate in the celebrations, and support a renewed commitment to health in the twenty-first century.