

Recommendations regarding the documentation of vaccinations given to Team Members

August 2022

Purpose:

This document provides recommendations to INSARAG USAR Teams regarding the documentation of vaccinations provided to Team Members to facilitate border crossings.

These recommendations are provided as Technical Reference Guidance notes, and hence are not mandatory. However, any nation may mandate vaccination entry requirements and therefore, clear documentation of Team Personnel vaccinations can facilitate entry.

Background:

Appropriate national authorities (e.g., Ministry of Health) may establish vaccination requirements for entry to their respective countries.

In the first half of the last century, WHO member countries agreed upon the concept of an International Certificate for Vaccination and Prophylaxis (or ICVP). This was designed to provide a common method for documentation of vaccinations that could be required for entry into countries. Originally, there were several vaccines required for documentation on the ICVP but overtime, the only vaccine that became associated with the ICVP was the yellow fever vaccine.¹ Yellow fever is a mosquito borne disease common to certain areas of South America, West and Central Africa.

There are still many countries that require documentation of a yellow fever vaccine for entry (even if just transiting through countries with endemic disease).² By using the ICVP, Teams provide a familiar and well accepted format for documentation of this requirement though there are other ways to present verification of this vaccination (e.g. Brazil uses a digital vaccination certification for its nationals when travelling).

Other less common vaccines can be required by host countries. One example includes the requirement for meningitis vaccine when joining the annual Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca as enforced by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. More recently, the world witnessed a very disparate set of actions enforced globally regarding the documentation of COVID 19 vaccines. These requirements also varied including both paper copy and digital formats.

¹ The yellow color of the ICVP led to the name “yellow card” but was coincidental to the use for the yellow fever vaccine.

² INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND HEALTH, ANNEX 1 – 6 MAY 2021, Countries with risk of yellow fever transmission and countries requiring yellow fever vaccination, [online]
https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/documents/emergencies/travel-advice/ith2021_annex1_draft_6may_final-draft-rev4feb2022.pdf?sfvrsn=19a4e923_1&download=true

Considerations:

- The ICVP is only agreed to through International Health Regulations (IHR) as being applicable to yellow fever vaccine.
- However, there may be individual country requirements that exist beyond this single vaccine.

Recommendations:

- All teams should investigate and be aware of a recipient country's vaccine entry requirements prior to departure. Any discrepancies between which vaccines team members have received and what the recipient country requires should be resolved with the relevant authorities prior to arrival of the team.
- Teams anticipating deployments to areas that require the yellow fever vaccine should consider use of the ICVP to document receipt of the vaccine and to be consistent with IHR and industry practice.
- Teams should consider a broader vaccination program for their members and may use lists such as those available from the WHO as a template for vaccine requirements for deploying team members.
- Teams should develop a common method for documentation of all vaccines delivered to Team members. This can include use of the ICVP for consistency of format or other templated developed by the Team. Yellow fever should still be documented on ICVP whether it is used as the common template or not for all vaccines.
- Regardless of record utilized, documentation should clearly indicate:
 - Name of record holder
 - Date of birth of record holder
 - Vaccines list
 - Date of administration of vaccine
 - Batch number of vaccine (ideally)
 - Stamp of vaccinating center (for yellow fever)
 - Signature or initials of individual administering vaccine