

A review of CARPHA initiatives to support FIC Implementation in the English- and Dutch- speaking Caribbean over the ten year period 2004-2013

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Abstract The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) provides technical support to implement the Family of International Classifications in 24 member states. In the area of strengthening mortality surveillance systems, CARPHA provides training for mortality coders and physicians responsible for completing the medical cause-of-death certificate; evaluates existing national surveillance systems; audits coded data; develops applications tools to strengthen national systems and acts as the regional repository for national mortality data. Recently, training for trainers in morbidity coding has been completed and a plan to strengthen national health information systems has been developed.

Introduction	Results
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The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) provides technical support in the area of public health to 24 member states (CMS) which include all English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries and Haiti. CARPHA was legally established in July 2011 by an Inter-Governmental Agreement signed by Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member states and began operation in January 2013. The Agency combines the functions (and much of the staff) of five pre-existing Caribbean Regional Health Institutes (RHIs).

One of these RHIs, the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC), from the early 1990's, provided technical support to implement, evaluate and improve use of the Family of International Classifications (FIC) in the Caribbean. CARPHA continues to provide those key services and functions to all English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries and Haiti. CARPHA has essentially been working in this area for over two decades.

Methods

All activities conducted by CAREC and CARPHA to implement, evaluate and improve FIC use in member states for the most recent 10-year period 2004-2013 will be reviewed and presented.

Results

Over the ten-year period under review, CARPHA has provided technical support to strengthen FIC implementation in both the areas of mortality and morbidity. In the area of mortality surveillance, technical support has been long-standing, while work to support morbidity surveillance began in 2013.

Activities completed over the ten year time period 2004-2013 are documented in Figures 1 and 2.

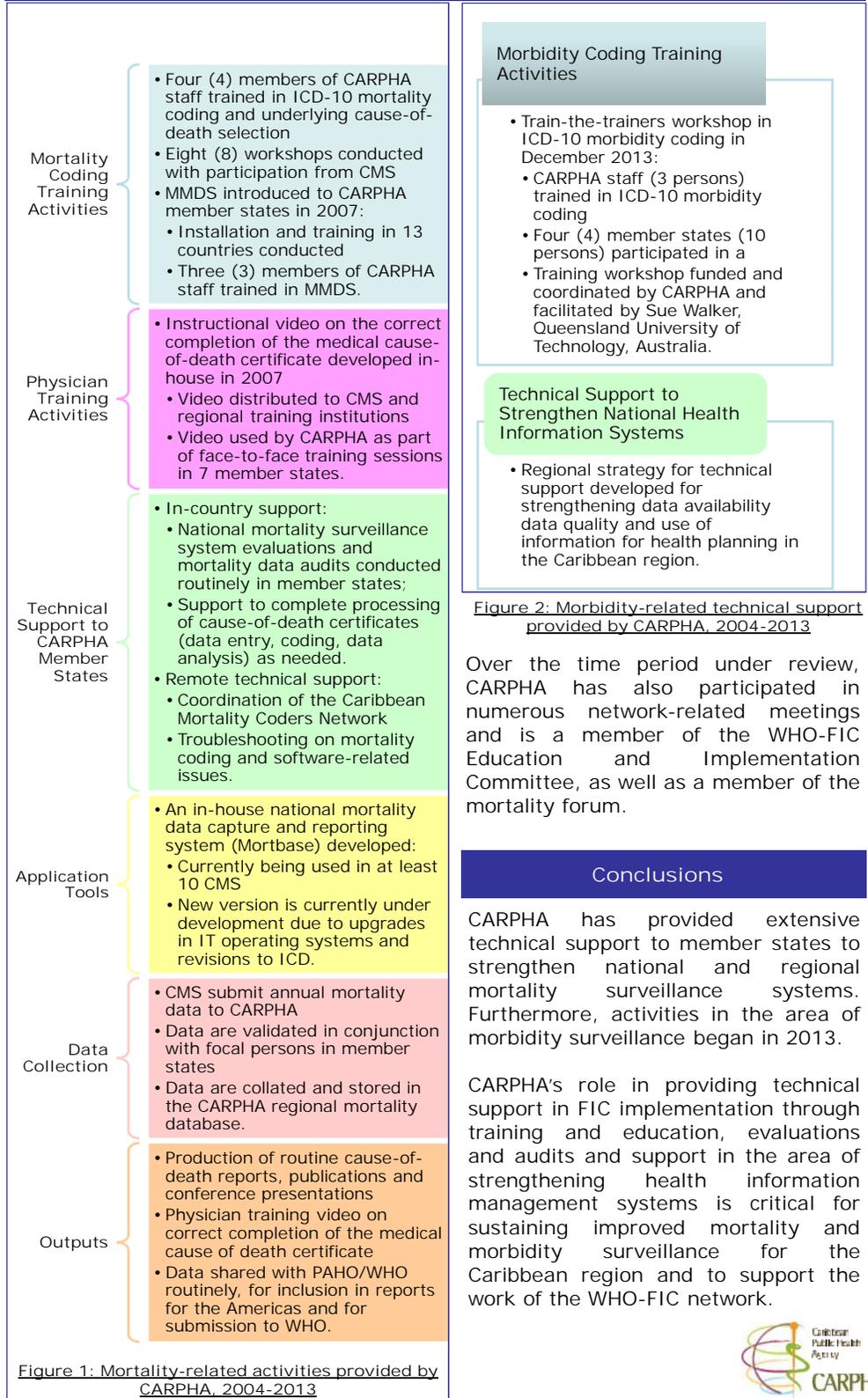


Figure 1: Mortality-related activities provided by CARPHA, 2004-2013

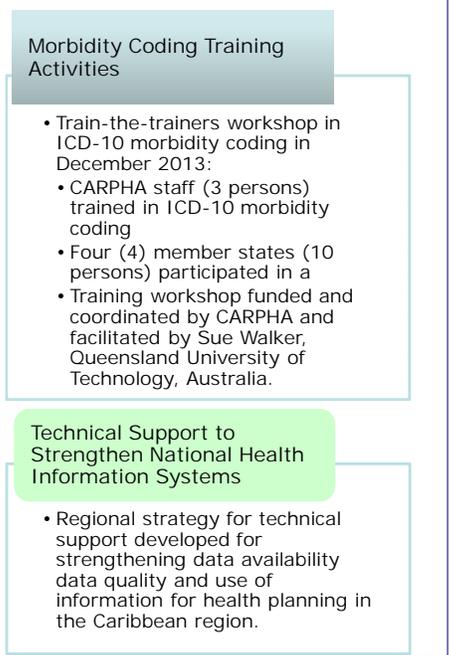


Figure 2: Morbidity-related technical support provided by CARPHA, 2004-2013

Over the time period under review, CARPHA has also participated in numerous network-related meetings and is a member of the WHO-FIC Education and Implementation Committee, as well as a member of the mortality forum.

Conclusions

CARPHA has provided extensive technical support to member states to strengthen national and regional mortality surveillance systems. Furthermore, activities in the area of morbidity surveillance began in 2013.

CARPHA's role in providing technical support in FIC implementation through training and education, evaluations and audits and support in the area of strengthening health information management systems is critical for sustaining improved mortality and morbidity surveillance for the Caribbean region and to support the work of the WHO-FIC network.