

SEMINAR SERIES IN BIOSTATISTICS



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Dr. Ranieri Guerra
World Health Organization
Geneva, Switzerland

Understanding the pandemic: interrelated health, economic and social aspects

The current pandemic has taken the entire world by surprise. International agencies, governments, media and the health, economic and social structures of our societies have been severely affected and have reacted almost invariably individually, in an attempt to mitigate the damage but failing to contain the virus in a coordinated way. The virus, though mapped since its isolation, is still undergoing investigations, and research is in progress constantly. Science has made unprecedented efforts to provide treatment and vaccines, now close to delivering their promise. However, the world still relies on quarantine and isolation measures developed by the Republic of Venice during the deadliest pandemic in human history, the Black Death that killed 200 million people between 1346 and 1353. Why this happened, where we are in the fight, how is the world learning to face a future which will have to deal with a change of several paradigms, moving from the words of an unforgettable US Surgeon General who said “It is time to close the book on infectious diseases, and declare the war against pestilence won”. These are the questions we will try to answer moving from that tragically wrong statement that we must amend.