

Dutch ambulance team a success at 2nd International EMS Championship in Israel

The Israeli ambulance organisation Magen David Adom (MDA) invited two Dutch ambulance teams, UMCG Ambulancezorg and RAV Flevoland, to compete in the 2nd International EMS Championship in Israel (7-10 September 2008). UMCG Ambulancezorg won second place in the competition. A Polish team won first place and an American team third.



A total of forty teams competed in the competition, sixteen of them from abroad (Canada, Norway, Turkey, Ireland, the UK, France, the Czech Republic, Poland, Germany, and the US). The other teams were MDA and from the Israeli army. The competition included both Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support (BLS). The Dutch teams from the provinces of Drenthe and Flevoland — comprising more than 200 specialised nurses — showed the best they had to offer, working day and night with passion and enthusiasm. The teams were judged according to professionalism, capability, stamina, cooperation and communication. Considering the extreme temperatures (between 40° and 45° C.), the Dutch teams demonstrated incredible ability. The organising committee clearly also felt the same way. They were deeply impressed by the professionalism of the Dutch specialised nurses.

The competition was held in the region surrounding the Dead Sea and the Negev Desert. Working under the slogan of 'Saving Lives at the Dead Sea', the group behind the competition did its best to give the participants an impression of the local surroundings and its rich history. These elements were cleverly interwoven into the rescue scenarios.

The competition consisted of eleven scenarios spread across two days and an evening. The participants had to contend with complex and challenging situations varying from a large-scale incident involving a gas explosion to a Bedouin baby in anaphylactic shock resulting from a scorpion sting. The event also included a few more playful moments. It concluded with a conference at which a variety of Israeli and foreign speakers were invited to share their views.



Ambulancezorg Nederland coordinated the Dutch participation in the competition. It served as a central contact point and represented Dutch ambulance care in Israel. It also gave a presentation about Dutch ambulance care during the conference on the last day of the event. The event offered Ambulancezorg Nederland a prime opportunity to take a look behind the scenes and gain ideas for organising a competition of this kind, both in terms of logistics and substance. It was also a way of making and maintaining international contacts, one of the main reasons the ambulance teams took part.

It was a special experience in every way for the Dutch contingent, and certainly one worth repeating. Right now, Ambulancezorg Nederland is considering holding a competition of this kind in the Netherlands and, if so, just how to go about it. It will be taking the experiences and information gleaned from the participation in Israel into account.

For more information, please contact:

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