MEETING SUMMARY

APMEN Vivax Working Group Annual Meeting

Bali, Indonesia; October 17-18, 2016

The 2016 annual Vivax Working Group (VxWG) meeting of the Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network was held in Bali in October 2016, with a focus on the safe and effective radical cure of *P. vivax*. It contained sessions on current status of *P. vivax* antirelapse studies, and new G6PD diagnostics, as well as a session on the barriers to rolling out G6PD testing and its cost effectiveness. A round table discussions was conducted to gather opinions and solutions on the incorporation of G6PD testing for case management, how and when to use it. On the second day, the VxWG joined the Surveillance and Response Working Group (SRWG) for a half-day integrated meeting, to discuss new highly sensitive diagnostics and how these could be applied to clinical management and surveillance, as well as areas for improved collaboration between the two working groups.

In attendance were 33 country partners representing 16 countries in the Asia Pacific and a range of partner institutions including: Australian Army Malaria Institute, CHAI, Eijkman Institute, Malaria Atlas Project (MAP), Malaria Consortium, Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV), PATH, Population Services International (PSI), UNICEF Indonesia, USAID-PMI, and the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO), among others.

Key discussion points from the meetings are being prepared for publication. A VxWG Business Meeting was held on the second day and is summarized below:

1. The VxWG voted on a new co-Chair since Dr Sanchai is no longer available for the post. Dr Albino Bobogare has been elected as new co-chair. Congratulations Alby.

2. A proposed workplan was discussed and a grant proposal submitted to the Gates Foundation to fund the continued activities of the VxWg. The workplan contains three thematic areas:

   a. **Surveillance:** This theme includes working with partners to facilitate the development of genotyping and serotyping platforms and methodologies for sharing and comparing parasite and host data from different locations in the region. Intensive exchange and collaboration will be facilitated between the surveillance and response working group to identify shared activities and encourage knowledge transfer. Surveys with country partners will be funded to address research priorities on parasite and host surveillance and these will include the prevalence of serological markers, G6PD deficiency and sub-microscopic parasitaemia. The VxWG will work with the Malaria Atlas Project (MAP) to create an open access database to map the prevalence of G6PD deficiency and key variants in populations and ethnic groups at risk of malaria. Focused workshops are planned to facilitate consensus building and sharing of evidence.
b. **Diagnostics:** This theme will include assessing the field performance and applicability of new diagnostics for parasite and host (e.g. novel RDTs for vivax malaria, ultrasensitive diagnostics for all malaria species and qualitative and quantitative G6PD diagnostic tests), generating knowledge on the implementation, practice and acceptance of novel diagnostics in routine care through qualitative studies in targeted countries. This is particularly important when planning ahead and paving the way for the introduction of tafenoquine. Focused workshops are planned to facilitate consensus building and sharing of evidence.

c. **Case Management:** This theme will focus on understanding the key impediments for the implementation the safe and effective radical cure of *P. vivax* through a range of qualitative studies with NMCPs. The will improve our understanding of key issues around adherence to primaquine radical cure through focus group interviews among affected populations. In addition the VxWG will work with the WorldWide Antimalarial Resistance Network (WWARN) to facilitate and expand the WWARN database for drug resistance and share individual level data in pooled analyses. The VxWG will also promote relevant findings from major clinical trials in the region through annual meetings to facilitate translation of results into policy and practice. This will include identifying areas of emerging chloroquine resistance, the optimal use of primaquine, preventative strategies to reduce malaria, and the introduction of tafenoquine.