

# Report of an Informal Consultation to Develop a 'Regional Strategy' for the Control of Viral Hepatitis

*WHO-SEARO, New Delhi, 16–18 April 2012*



**World Health  
Organization**  
Regional Office for South-East Asia

SEA-CD-256  
Distribution: General

# Report of an Informal Consultation to Develop a 'Regional Strategy' for the Control of Viral Hepatitis

*WHO-SEARO, New Delhi, 16–18 April 2012*

**© World Health Organization 2012**

All rights reserved.

Requests for publications, or for permission to reproduce or translate WHO publications – whether for sale or for noncommercial distribution – can be obtained from Publishing and Sales, World Health Organization, Regional Office for South-East Asia, Indraprastha Estate, Mahatma Gandhi Marg, New Delhi 110 002, India (fax: +91 11 23370197; e-mail: [publications@searo.who.int](mailto:publications@searo.who.int)).

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

The mention of specific companies or of certain manufacturers' products does not imply that they are endorsed or recommended by the World Health Organization in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned. Errors and omissions excepted, the names of proprietary products are distinguished by initial capital letters.

All reasonable precautions have been taken by the World Health Organization to verify the information contained in this publication. However, the published material is being distributed without warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied. The responsibility for the interpretation and use of the material lies with the reader. In no event shall the World Health Organization be liable for damages arising from its use.

This publication does not necessarily represent the decisions or policies of the World Health Organization.

Printed in India

## Contents

### *Page*

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Inaugural session and opening remarks .....   | 1 |
| 2. Overview of the WHO Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Viral Hepatitis ..... | 2 |
| 3. Review of regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis .....                             | 3 |
| 4. Conclusions and recommendations.....  | 4 |
| 5. Closing session.....  | 6 |

## Annexes

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. Objectives .....          | 7 |
| 2. Agenda .....              | 8 |
| 3. List of participants..... | 9 |



## 1. Inaugural session and opening remarks

An informal consultation was organized in the WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia (SEARO) from 16-18 April 2012 with the overall objective to “develop a regional strategy for the control of viral hepatitis in the South-East Asia Region”.

The informal consultation was opened by Dr Samlee Plianbangchang, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia (SEA). In his remarks, he highlighted the importance and significant burden of acute and chronic viral hepatitis infections and consequences. Despite the efforts of Member States to prevent and control viral hepatitis infections, these diseases continue to remain serious public health problems in the WHO SEA Region. The World Health Assembly resolution (WHA63.18) adopted in May 2010 called for comprehensive prevention and control strategies for viral hepatitis. In particular, the Health Assembly requested WHO to establish, in collaboration with Member States, the necessary guidelines, strategies, time-bound goals and tools for the surveillance, prevention and control of viral hepatitis. WHO-SEARO has organized this informal consultation to formulate a new comprehensive strategy for the prevention and control of viral hepatitis intended for health policy-makers, donors and implementing agencies and institutions at national and regional levels.

Dr Vason Pinyowiwat, Technical Officer (Public Health), WHO-SEARO, introduced the participants from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal and Thailand, the temporary advisers and the WHO-secretariat. The names of Prof. Dr David Handojo Muljono from Indonesia, Dr Supamit Chunsuttiwat from Thailand and Prof. Dr Mohammad Ali from Bangladesh were then proposed by the Regional Director and they were elected as Chairperson, Co-Chairperson and Rapporteur respectively for the meeting.

The overall objective of the consultation was to:

- Develop a regional strategy for the control of viral hepatitis in the SEA Region.

The specific objectives were to:

- Review the burden of viral hepatitis and draft a regional strategic framework for the prevention and control of viral hepatitis;
- Develop guidelines on surveillance of viral hepatitis, including case definitions and a standard format, and
- Develop a draft “action plan” for implementation of surveillance activities for viral hepatitis.

## **2. Overview of the WHO Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Viral Hepatitis**

An introduction to the WHO Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Viral Hepatitis was provided by Dr Tim Nguyen, WHO-HQ Global Hepatitis Programme. In 2010, the World Health Assembly adopted resolution 63.18 sponsored by Brazil, Columbia and Indonesia, which called for comprehensive approach to hepatitis prevention and control and resolved that 28 July be designated as World Hepatitis Day in order to provide an opportunity for education and greater understanding of viral hepatitis as a global public health problem, and to stimulate the strengthening of preventive and control measures of this disease in Member States.

The resolution urges Member States to improve epidemiological surveillance systems and to strengthen laboratory capacity to generate reliable information, as well as incorporate the policies, strategies and tools recommended by WHO to strengthen national health systems in order to address the prevention and control of viral hepatitis effectively through the provision of health promotion and national surveillance, including tools for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of viral hepatitis, vaccination, information, communication and injection safety. WHO is requested to establish, in collaboration with Member States, the necessary guidelines, strategies, time-bound goals and tools for the surveillance, prevention and control of viral hepatitis; support the development of related scientific measures; improve the assessment of global and regional economic impact and estimate the burden of viral hepatitis and invite international organizations, financial institutions and other partners to provide support to developing countries.

The WHO Global Hepatitis Programme, created in December 2011, aims to: reduce the transmission of the various agents that cause viral hepatitis; reduce the morbidity and mortality due to viral hepatitis and improve the care of patients with viral hepatitis; and reduce the socioeconomic impact of viral hepatitis at individual, community and population levels. The strategy includes; (i) Partnerships, resource mobilization and communication; (ii) Data for policy and action; (iii) Prevention of virus transmission; and (iv) Screening, care and treatment (Four Axis Strategies).

The new estimate of worldwide viral hepatitis burden was presented. It was also stated that cirrhosis is now among leading causes of deaths. It was responsible for 1.2 million new deaths in 2010, and caused a total of 35 000 000 Years of Life Lost (YLL).

### **3. Review of regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis**

The participants intensively discussed the following draft documents;

- Burden of viral hepatitis in the countries of the WHO South-East Asia Region
- Regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis
  - Mission and vision; Themes and cross-cutting issues
  - Framework for surveillance
  - Framework for prevention
  - Framework for education
  - Framework for medical care and treatment
  - Framework for research
  - Framework for policy, planning and resource mobilization
- Guidelines for surveillance of viral hepatitis
- Action plan for the implementation of viral hepatitis surveillance.

It was proposed at the consultation that the SEARO Secretariat should incorporate comments and inputs provided by participants during the

meeting into the regional strategy on prevention and control of viral hepatitis, which will then be presented and reviewed by representatives from the Member States at the next regional consultation tentatively planned to be held in July 2012. It was also recommended at the consultation that WHO should invite experts and national surveillance focal points from Member States to discuss and develop the regional guidelines on surveillance of viral hepatitis, based on the final framework for surveillance.

## **4. Conclusions and recommendations**

The following were the recommended action points for WHO-SEARO and Member States that emerged from the discussion:

### ***Recommendations for WHO-SEARO***

- (1) To establish a regional technical advisory group for viral hepatitis with the following terms of reference;
  - Advise the Regional Director on policies, strategies and activities crucial for the prevention and control of viral hepatitis in the Region;
  - Provide a strategic direction in implementing the WHO regional strategy for prevention and control in Member States;
  - Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the control strategy and make practical recommendations;
  - Advise on the use of appropriate and new technology for effective prevention and control of viral hepatitis; and
  - Identify areas of operational research and capacity building required by countries.
- (2) To advocate and develop a regional strategy for resource mobilization; develop a list of priorities for funding, identify potential financial institutions interested to provide resources for prevention and control of viral hepatitis and organize meetings of potential donors.
- (3) To develop a standard protocol on evaluation of the national viral hepatitis surveillance system and support countries to conduct such evaluations.

- (4) To facilitate establishment of a national centre for viral hepatitis surveillance and prevention, and a national centre for laboratory diagnoses of viral hepatitis in Member States.
- (5) To support countries, efforts on pre-qualification of viral hepatitis diagnostics and quality assurance.
- (6) To collaborate with Member States in building research capacity at national, institutional and individual levels, especially in training and engaging researchers on research management and application of research on viral hepatitis control.
- (7) To support countries to coordinate hepatitis B birthdose vaccine delivery with other components of the Expanded Programme on Immunization.
- (8) To support countries, efforts in elimination of transmission of hepatitis B and C related to medical manipulation, including 100% of mandatory screening of all blood and blood products.
- (9) To provide technical assistance to countries for developing medical services and for establishing standards of procedures and national referral centres for medical care and treatment of viral hepatitis.
- (10) To provide technical support to countries on food safety, water quality, environmental sanitation and hygiene development.

***Recommendations for Member States***

- (1) To establish a national committee on viral hepatitis responsible for the development of national strategy and programmes on viral hepatitis prevention and control, and for their supervision, coordination, implementation and monitoring at the national level.
- (2) To identify, raise funds and mobilize financial resources from both public and private sectors to support the programme for prevention and control of viral hepatitis.
- (3) To conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the national viral hepatitis surveillance system.
- (4) To establish a national centre for surveillance and prevention of viral hepatitis and a national centre for laboratory diagnosis of viral hepatitis.

- (5) To include appropriate viral hepatitis research agenda into national health policies and programmes.
- (6) To incorporate the hepatitis B vaccine birthdose into the maternal and newborn care package.
- (7) To review current national policies on mandatory screening of blood and blood products for hepatitis B and C, in context of using new and highly specific and sensitive standardized diagnostic kits.
- (8) To create a safe environment for accessing information, and for testing and providing care, particularly to people in rural areas and from underserved communities, and to educate the general public on the need to reduce the practice of administering unnecessary injections.
- (9) To establish a national referral centre on medical care and treatment of viral hepatitis
- (10) To develop national standard procedures for the management of acute viral hepatitis as well as for guidance on counselling and supportive care for infected individuals.
- (11) To develop standard operating procedures for containment of HAV and HEV outbreaks with emphasis on measures related to food safety, water quality, environmental sanitation and hygiene.

## **5. Closing session**

Dr Supamit Chunsuttiwat, Co-Chairperson, expressed his gratitude to WHO-SEARO staff for organizing the informal consultation, and to all participants for their active participation and contribution to the development of the regional strategy for prevention and control of viral hepatitis. He then declared the meeting closed.

## **Annex 1**

# **Objectives**

The overall objective of the consultation is to *'develop a regional strategy for the control of viral hepatitis in the South-East Asia Region'*.

The specific objectives are to:

- (1) Review the burden of viral hepatitis and draft a regional strategic framework for the prevention and control of viral hepatitis;
- (2) Develop guidelines on the surveillance of viral hepatitis, including case definitions and a standard format, and
- (3) Develop a draft 'action plan' for the implementation of surveillance for viral hepatitis.

## **Annex 2**

### **Agenda**

- (1) Review of regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis – Burden of viral hepatitis in the countries of the WHO South-East Asia Region
- (2) Review of regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis – Mission and vision; Themes and cross cutting issues
- (3) Review of regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis – Framework for surveillance
- (4) Review of regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis – Framework for prevention
- (5) Review of regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis – Framework for education
- (6) Review of regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis – Framework for medical care and treatment
- (7) Review of regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis – Framework for research
- (8) Review of regional strategy on control of viral hepatitis – Framework for policy, planning and resource mobilization
- (9) Review guidelines for surveillance of viral hepatitis
- (10) Review action plan for the implementation of viral hepatitis surveillance
- (11) Conclusions & recommendations

## Annex 4

### List of participants

#### Temporary Advisers

##### Bangladesh

Prof. Dr Mohammad Ali  
Head of the Department of  
Hepato-Biliary- Pancreatic Surgery and  
Liver Transplant Services,  
BIRDEM Hospital Dhaka, Bangladesh  
[Also Secretary General,  
Liver Foundation of Bangladesh & Member,  
Public Health Panel, WHA, WHO, Geneva]  
Tele: 088-02-9146537  
Fax: 088-02-9128239  
E-mail: mohammad.ali\_bd@yahoo.com

##### India

Prof. Rakesh Aggarwal  
Professor (Gastroenterology)  
Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of  
Medical Sciences (SGPGIMS),  
Lucknow, India  
[Also a member of WHO Expert Committee  
on Viral Hepatitis]  
Tele: (91) (522) 2494410  
Fax: (522) 2668017  
E-mail: aggarwal.ra@gmail.com

Dr Vidya A. Arankalle  
Scientist  
National Institute of Virology  
20-A, Dr Ambedkar Road  
P.B. No. 11, Pune-411001, India  
Tele: 020 26127301; 26006390 [Hep. Lab]  
Mobile: +91-93710-16417  
Fax: 91-020-26122669  
E-mail: varankalle@yahoo.com

Dr Shiv Kumar Sarin  
Senior Professor and Head  
Department of Hepatology  
Director, Institute of Liver and Biliary  
Sciences (ILBS)  
Adjunct Prof. Molecular Medicine  
Jawahar Lal Nehru University  
New Delhi, India  
Tele: +91-11-46300000 (O)  
+91-11-26873563 (R)  
Fax: +91-11-46123504  
E-mail: shivsarini@gmail.com

##### Indonesia

Prof. (Dr) David Handojo Muljono  
The Chairman of the National Committee on  
Viral Hepatitis  
Head of the Department of Hepatitis and  
Emerging Diseases  
Eijkman Institute of Molecular Biology  
Indonesia  
Tele: 6221 314 8695  
Fax: 6221 314 7982  
E-mail: davidhm@eijkman.go.id

Dr Yullita Evarini Y.  
Director  
Sub-directorate of Viral Hepatitis  
Directorate General of Diseases Control &  
Environmental Health  
Ministry of Health, Indonesia  
Tele: 021-7250482  
Fax: 021-42870659  
E-mail: yullita\_yuzwar@yahoo.com

### **Myanmar**

Dr Yi Yi Kyaw  
Deputy Director  
Blood Programming Division  
Department of Medical Research  
(Lower Myanmar)  
No. 5, Ziwaka Road, Dagon Township  
Yangon 11191, Myanmar  
Tele: 95-1-375447, 375457, Ext. 146/147  
Fax: 95-1-251514  
Mobile: 95-9-5177094  
E-mail: yiyikyaw@gmail.com

Dr Htun Tin  
Assistant Director  
Central Epidemiology Unit  
Department of Health  
Ministry of Health  
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar  
Contact No. 95-67-420437  
Fax 95-67-421205  
Email: htuntin.dr@googlemail.com

### **Nepal**

Dr Geeta Shakya  
Chief Consultant Pathologist  
National Public Health Laboratory  
Teku, Kathmandu, Nepal  
Tele: +977 1 4252421  
Fax: +977-01-4247032  
E-mail: names@healthnet.org.np

### **Thailand**

Prof. Yong Poovorawan  
Centre of Excellence in Clinical Virology  
Faculty of Medicine  
Chulalongkorn University  
Bangkok 10330, Thailand  
Tele: (662) 256 4951  
Fax: (662) 2564963  
E-mail: yong.p@chula.ac.th

Dr Supamit Chunsuttiwat  
Senior Medical Adviser, DDC  
Ministry of Public Health  
Thailand  
Tele: (66 2) 590 3370  
Fax: (66 2) 951 0600  
E-mail: supamitr@ddc.moph.go.th

### **Other Agencies**

Dr Charles Gore  
President  
World Hepatitis Alliance  
7, Rue du Marché  
1204, Geneva  
Switzerland  
E-mail: charles.gore@worldhepatitisalliance.org

Dr Francisco Averhoff  
Associate Director for Global Health  
Division of Viral Hepatitis  
National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis,  
STD, and TB Prevention  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road, MS G-37  
Atlanta, GA 30333, U.S.A.  
Fax: 404-718-8588  
E-mail: fma0@cdc.gov

### **Secretariat**

#### **WHO-HQ**

Dr Tim Nguyen  
Technical Officer  
HQ/PED Pandemic and Epidemic Diseases  
WHO-Headquarters  
20 Avenue Appia  
1211 Geneva 27  
Switzerland  
Ph: +41 22 79 13426  
E-mail: NguyenT@who.int

#### **WHO-SEARO**

Dr A.P. Dash  
Ag. Director  
Department of Communicable Diseases (CDS)  
WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia  
Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi-110002  
Tel: 91-11-233070804  
Fax: 91-11-23309195  
Email: dasha@searo.who.int

Dr M. R. Nihal Abeysinghe  
Regional Adviser – Vaccine Preventable  
Diseases (IVD)  
WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia  
Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi-110002  
Tel: 91-11-233070804  
Fax: 91-11-2330591  
Email: abeysinghen@searo.who.int

Dr Razia N. Pendse  
Scientist  
Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Unit  
Department of Communicable Diseases  
WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia  
Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi-110002  
Tel: 91-11-233070804  
Fax: 91-11-23309195  
Email: pendsera@sear.who.int

Dr Vason Pinyowiwat  
Technical Officer – Public Health  
Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology (DSE)  
Department of Communicable Diseases  
WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia  
Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi-110002  
Tel: 91-11-233070804  
Fax: 91-11-2330591  
Email: pinyowiwatv@searo.who.int

Dr Supriya Bezbaruah  
DSE Communication Specialist (DCS)  
Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology (DSE)  
Department of Communicable Diseases  
WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia  
Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi-110002  
Tel: 91-11-233070804  
Fax: 91-11-2330591  
Email: bezbaruahs@searo.who.int

Dr Alex Andjaparidze  
TIP (Viral Hepatitis)  
Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology (DSE)  
Department of Communicable Diseases  
WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia  
Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi-110002  
Tel: 91-11-233070804  
Fax: 91-11-2330591  
Email: andjaparidzea@searo.who.int

Dr Aparna Singh Shah  
TIP (LAB)  
Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology (DSE)  
Department of Communicable Diseases  
WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia  
Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi-110002  
Tel: 91-11-233070804  
Fax: 91-11-2330591  
Email: shahap@searo.who.int

The World Health Assembly resolution (WHA63.18) adopted in May 2010 called for comprehensive prevention and control strategies for viral hepatitis. In particular, the Health Assembly requested WHO to establish, in collaboration with Member States, the necessary guidelines, strategies, time-bound goals and tools for the surveillance, prevention and control of viral hepatitis. WHO-SEARO has organized this informal consultation to formulate a new comprehensive strategy for the prevention and control of viral hepatitis intended for health policy-makers, donors and implementing agencies and institutions at national and regional levels.



**World Health  
Organization**

**Regional Office for South-East Asia**

World Health House  
Indraprastha Estate,  
Mahatma Gandhi Marg,  
New Delhi-110002, India



SEA-CD-256