

Highlights 2007 - EPI symposium, North West Province

Prof. GA Ogunbanjo
University of Limpopo (Medunsa campus)

Email: gao@intekom.co.za

AFRO Region EPI Strategic Plan

Presenter: Dr. Charles Mugero (WHO AFRO)

- DPT3 coverage increased from **54%** (1995) to **69%** (2005)
- **WHO target for Africa:** DPT3 coverage to 90% (end 2009)
- **The question is** – How will this be attained and sustained in all districts with many competing health priorities?
- Increased WHO support is **very crucial** in attaining 90% DPT coverage in Africa

EPI-SA successes, challenges and future plans

Presenter: Mr. Johan van der Heever (National EPI)

- Measles vaccine prevents 1 million deaths annually
- RSA declared free of wild polio virus – 2006 & NNT eliminated in 2002

- Challenges:
 1. Available, reliable denominators for accurate vaccine coverage
 2. Td vaccine introduction at 7 & 12 years (?2008)
 3. Investigation to introduce Pneumococcal & Rotavirus vaccines (Cost is still an issue!!)
 4. Serious issues with cold chain monitoring

Immunisation, Ethics and Law

Presenter: Dr. Peet Rautenbach (UL – Medunsa Campus)

- Know the side –effects of the vaccine you administer
- Only compulsory mandatory vaccine in RSA is yellow fever
- Informed consent: Children’s Act 38 of 2005

New age of consent 12 or older

Global Polio eradication

Presenter: Prof Barry Schoub (NICD)

- Americas, W/Pacific & Europe certified Polio-free regions
- No formal deadline set for the global eradication of polio
- Polio endemic countries: Nigeria, India, Afghanistan & Pakistan (Types 1 & 3)
- Can we eradicate polio? **Yes** (When?)
- What about polio extinction? **No**

Progress with Polio eradication - RSA

Presenter: Dr. Kgokoana Khomo (NCC – RSA)

- Last lab confirmed polio case in RSA – April 1989
- 6 provinces with OPV3 coverage >80% for 3 years
- Only 2 provinces (**LP & NC**) met the WHO - AFP detection rate (2 per 100 000 below 15 years of age)
- Challenges: Data quality; Research/regular surveys; high risk populations (refugees); involvement of academics in EPI

Restructuring of Medical & Nursing curricula

Presenter: Prof Anwar Hoosen (UL – Medunsa Campus)

- Training needs assessments: Poor coverage of EPI topics; outdated curricula etc (done in 14 African countries)
- Solution? EPI curriculum restructuring & training
- Progress made with allocation of time on the UL (Medunsa Campus) **undergraduate MBChB** curriculum
- Proposal for **postgraduate diploma** in Public Health (Infectious Diseases)

Role of social mobilization & immunization coverage

Presenter: Blantina Mabuela (NDOH)

- Stressed the importance of having a **defaulter tracking** system for EPI
- Need to develop a **rapid response** to deal with rumours on immunisation
- Funding **is crucial** for social mobilization to be successful

Slogan:

Go “**RED**” – Reach Every District” and
Get “**REC** – Reaching Every Child”

North West Experience with recent Measles outbreak in RSA

Presenter: Ms. Calvinia Sebekedi (DOH, N/West)

- She highlighted the importance of **epidemiology** in understanding disease outbreaks
- It **is not** enough to gather information but intervention strategies must be planned & instituted
- Lessons learnt:
 1. Low immunization coverage causes outbreaks
 2. All outbreaks must be properly **investigated**
 3. Strengthen **social mobilization** in EPI

Rotavirus burden

Presenter: Ms. Mapaseka Seheri (MRC Unit, UL – Medunsa)

- Rota virus is the **most common** cause of diarrhoea worldwide
- Causes 150 000 deaths in sub-Saharan Africa
- Price is still an issue:
 1. RotaRix (2 doses): Retail price of R228 / dose;
 2. RotaTeg (3 doses) – Retail price is R420 / dose
- It is crucial to include Rota virus vaccine in the EPI but current retail prices must be **significantly** reduced

Way forward

- All presentations will be available from next week on the SAVIC website → www.savic.ac.za
- Share take home messages with colleagues at work
- Let us support EPI(SA) achieve their set goals in all health districts

Remember the slogan:

Go “**RED**” – **R**each **E**very **D**istrict” and
Get “**REC** – **R**eaching **E**very **C**hild”