

Title: Assessing the Safety of Anti-malarial Drugs in Africa

Symposium topic category: Malaria / drug safety

Date and time: 5th December 2011, between 10:15 am – 12:15pm

Location: Philadelphia Marriott Downtown Hotel, Grand Ballroom Salon G

Symposium description:

Artemisinin-based Combination Treatments (ACTs) for malaria have been widely deployed in Africa. Reassuring safety profiles have been documented in randomised controlled trials, but individual studies are usually insufficiently powered to detect rare or unknown side effects, do not evaluate the safety of multiple ACT courses in individuals and exclude specific groups such as women in pregnancy or those with underlying medical conditions. Routine pharmacovigilance systems are underpowered in most settings to evaluate the safety of drugs when deployed at scale. This symposium brings together several of the initiatives currently working to address these deficiencies and to consolidate the safety profile of ACTs.

Symposium objectives:

To raise awareness of the importance of assessing the safety and effectiveness of commonly used essential drugs;

To describe several approaches and methods for generating data on the safety of ACTs in clinical trials and in routine practice;

To understand the roles of the ACT Consortium, the Malaria in Pregnancy Consortium, the INDEPTH Effectiveness and Safety Studies platform and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Advocacy and Training in Pharmacovigilance.

Symposium Programme:

Chairs: David Schellenberg, LSHTM, and Patrick Kachur, CDC

1. Technological innovations for better health delivery in resource constrained settings: linking household data to health facility data. (20 minutes) *Honorati Masanja, Ifakara Health Institute, Dar es Salaam Tanzania;*
2. Evaluating the safety of ACTs in practice: the structure and function of a new safety repository (20 minutes) *Cheryl Pace, ACT Consortium and Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine*
3. INESS Platform: Health systems dynamics and pharmacovigilance in sub-Saharan Africa (20 minutes) *Fred Binka, INESS, School of Public Health University of Ghana*
4. Assessing safety in pregnancy; the approach of the Malaria in Pregnancy Consortium (20 minutes) *Esperanca Sevens, Malaria in Pregnancy Consortium and Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique*
5. Evaluating the safety of anti-malarial drugs and vaccines in Africa; a WHO perspective (20 minutes) *Alex Dodo, WHO Collaborating. Centre for Advocacy and Training in Pharmacovigilance, University of Ghana Medical School, Accra, Ghana*