Agenda item 11.14 21 May 2010

Chagas disease: control and elimination

The Sixty-third World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on Chagas disease: control and elimination;¹

Recognizing that all transmission routes (namely by vectors, transfusion, organ transplantation, and by vertical and oral routes) have to be tackled, and that, in particular, domestic vectorial transmission in Latin America has to be eliminated, with the understanding that elimination means stable interruption of domestic transmission;

Expressing its satisfaction at the considerable progress achieved by countries towards the goal of eliminating Chagas disease, as recommended in resolution WHA51.14;

Underlining that 2009 marked the centenary of the description of this disease by Dr Carlos Chagas;

Recognizing the success achieved through the intergovernmental initiatives in Latin America, and acknowledging the progress made through vector-control strategies;

Recognizing the increasing number of cases of Chagas disease in countries where the disease is not endemic;

Taking into account the need for harmonization of diagnostic and treatment procedures;

Recognizing the need for the provision of appropriate medical care for people affected by Chagas disease;

Underlining the need for more effective, safe and adequate medicines, including paediatric formulations, and for better coverage and distribution of those currently available;

Recalling resolution CD49.R19 adopted by the 49th Directing Council of PAHO in 2009, which urges Members States to commit themselves to the elimination or the reduction of neglected diseases and other related poverty diseases, including Chagas disease, with the aim that disease no longer represents a public health problem;

¹ Document A63/17.
Acknowledging the significant collaboration and support among Member States and the support of other partners and appreciating their continuous assistance,

1. **URGES Member States:**

   (1) to reinforce efforts to strengthen and consolidate national control programmes especially in areas where Chagas disease has re-emerged, in disease-endemic and non-endemic countries and to establish them where there are none;

   (2) to establish mechanisms to ensure broad coverage of adequate control measures, including the promotion of decent and healthy living conditions, prevention and the integration of specific actions within health services based on primary care, together with strengthening community participation;

   (3) to harmonize systems and strengthen capacities for surveillance, data collection and analysis and dissemination of information;

   (4) to integrate the care of patients with acute and chronic clinical forms of Chagas disease into primary health services;

   (5) to reinforce the provision of existing treatments in disease-endemic countries with the aim of making access universal;

   (6) to promote and encourage operational research on control of Chagas disease in order:

      (a) to interrupt transmission by domestic insect vectors through their control and elimination;

      (b) to promote the development of medicines that are more suitable, safe and affordable;

      (c) to promote the development of a valid and accessible test of cure;

      (d) to reduce the risk of late complications of the infection;

      (e) to establish systems of early detection, in particular for the detection of new infections, of congenital infections in newborns and the reactivation of the disease in immunocompromised patients;

      (f) to optimize blood transfusion safety and screening procedures in endemic countries and to consider implementation of appropriate screening procedures in countries where the disease is not endemic;

   (7) to strengthen and harmonize public health policies to reduce the burden of Chagas disease, particularly in countries where the disease is not endemic;

   (8) to promote the development of public health measures in disease-endemic and non-endemic countries, with special focus on endemic areas, for the prevention of transmission through blood transfusion and organ transplantation, early diagnosis of congenital transmission and management of cases;
(9) to integrate, at the primary health-care level, diagnosis and treatment of Chagas disease in patients in both acute and chronic phases of the disease;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to draw attention to the burden of Chagas disease and to the need to provide equitable access to medical services for the management and prevention of the disease;

(2) to strengthen implementation of vector-control activities in order to achieve interruption of domestic transmission of *Trypanosoma cruzi* and to promote research to improve or develop new prevention strategies;

(3) to promote in areas endemic for Chagas disease action to detect infected donors at blood banks in order to integrate strategies for safe blood;

(4) to provide support to the countries of the Americas in order to strengthen intergovernmental initiatives and the technical secretariat of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau as a successful form of technical cooperation among countries, and to consider an initiative for the prevention and control of Chagas disease in non-endemic regions;

(5) to collaborate with Member States and intergovernmental initiatives with the aim of setting objectives and goals for the interruption of transmission, particularly for domestic vectorial transmission in Latin American countries;

(6) to support the mobilization of national and international, public and private financial and human resources to ensure achievement of the goals;

(7) to promote research related to prevention, control and care of Chagas disease;

(8) to promote intersectoral efforts and collaboration, and facilitate networking between organizations and partners interested in supporting the development and the strengthening of Chagas disease-control programmes;

(9) to report on progress in the elimination of Chagas disease to the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly through the Executive Board.

Eighth plenary meeting, 21 May 2010
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