

Minutes of meeting

PPHSN LabNet TWB Teleconference

Date: 26 April 2011

Time: Suva Fiji – 10.00 am; Noumea – 9.00 am; Wellington – 10.00 am; Melbourne – 8.00 am

Participants:

Dr. Kim Wilson, NRL Melbourne

Mr. John Elliot, PPTC Wellington

Dr. Karne Nahapetyan, WHO Suva

Dr. Suzanne Chanteau, IPNC Noumea

Dr. Ann-Claire Gourinat, IPNC Noumea

Sala Elbourne, SPC Suva Public Health

Elva Borja, SPC Suva Animal health

Dr. Alan Garvez, SPC Suva HIV

AGENDA

- Welcome by Sala Elbourne
- Introduction by each member
- Adaptation of agenda – other agenda to be discussed
 - ✓ Sala provided a summary on the PPHSN LabNet meeting held Nov 2010 and the proposed revival of LabNet TWB.
 - ✓ Objective of the teleconference was defined.
 - ✓ What is the level of involvement of animal health in the PPHSN LabNet and TWB?
 - (Elva) At this stage, it is the objective to have animal health representation on regional forums for more awareness on laboratory issues, involvement on training to develop laboratory skills.
- LTWB terms of reference
 1. Strategic development of laboratory services
 - 1st bullet: add Asia Pacific strategy for Strengthening Health and Laboratory Services for '2010-2015'.
 - 2nd bullet: add 'strategic plans' after policies and standards
 - 3rd bullet: need to specify what kind of assessment tool
 - 4th bullet: statement is awkward, may need to say something similar to 'providing expertise in laboratory situation in the countries'
 2. Advocacy
 - 1st bullet: what kind of regional plans are considered in this statement. Include 'logical policies' in the statement.
 3. Communication, coordination, and collaboration
 - 1st bullet: need to indicate which reference lab, is it the national reference laboratory or international reference laboratory.
 - (Sala) The statement refers to both disease specific reference laboratory and International reference laboratories that can assist neighboring PICTs.
 - 3rd bullet: specify the level of twinning arrangements whether it is with reference laboratories. There are several Polynesian countries with sending specimen to NZ but are

not part of PPHSN LabNet . are we restricting the laboratories in the Pacific than we need to?

- (Sala) NRL is one laboratory that volunteered to provide training and development of SOPS. The statement might be restricted but we can expand if agreed.
- There should be standardized approach in twinning arrangements and training.
- There are MOUs established with district health boards..to ensure that these MOUs are understood and standards are maintained.

4. Training

- Add a bullet for in-country trainings and IATA training.
- (Sala) Indeed facilitating IATA training is work of TWB. While standardization of in-country training is something to be looked at.
- 3rd bullet: there is a need to generalize the statement instead of specifying reference laboratories as training venues.
- 4th bullet: monitoring & evaluation should include the standardization of in-country trainings and continuous surveillance.

5. Technical expertise regarding appropriate methods and technology

6. Accreditation and quality improvement

- (IPNC) has different accreditation system which is followed.
- (JE) Agree that French territories need to apply national regulation but it will be an advantage to have a regional standard that countries can (has the option to) comply with.
- 1st bullet: change statement to ' national and regional laboratory accreditation system'.

Membership

- Include in membership level 1 and 2 representatives
- (Sala) Level 1 & 2 are represented in the PPHSN Coordinating Body so there might be no need to include level 1 in the TWB
- (JE)...PALM
- (Sala) PALM – Pacific Association of Laboratory Medicine, have elected a temporary President...may be from Solomon Islands.
- (KN) Need more specification on membership and chairperson, whether the chairperson will serve for 1 or 2 years.
- (Sala) It might be worthwhile to note that PPHSN meeting is held every 2 years.
- (JE) It is better for chairperson to serve for 2 years. If the chairperson leaves within the 2 years, another individual from the same organization can take over. It is the organization chairing rather than the individual.
- TWB agreed that chairperson is to serve for 2 years.
- Sala requested to identify the chairperson from TWB.
- The need and function for a chairperson was raised. It is seen practical for SPC to coordinate the group for the next 2 years instead of electing a chairperson.
- Teleconference meeting 2-3 times a year depending on the need to coordinate activities and issues.

- Prioritizing LTWB activities

Draft recommendation for member states

1. Laboratory strengthening initiatives

- List of possible funding body so that we can put in an application on a regional perspective.
- (Sala) SPC can provide an initial listing.
- Dr. John Elliot provided a brief on the activities of PPTC POHLN diploma course on laboratory medical technology and its association with Fiji Veterinary course, Otago University and Auckland University.
- (KN) National policy Fiji Plan have been endorsed by the government. Quality standards are also to be put in place. Plan for Kiribati and Solomon Islands to draft policies. As earlier mentioned, we need more pushing for policies to be in place. 5-6 more countries are to be looked at between late 2011 or early 2012 including Tuvalu, Samoa and FSM. Plans are currently processed and being finalized including strategic plans but no standards.

2. Inventory and procurement

- 1st bullet: (KN) In Fiji for example, the laboratory manager (pathologist) and biologist is not directly involved and not really represented in procurement.
- Most laboratories have no control over procurement of supplies they are provided with.
- It will be very hard to accomplish. We can provide checklist but must be coordinated with Ministry of health offices
- It is a priority that each laboratory has an inventory system and the laboratory manager is represented in the procurement committee.
- (Sala) How can TWB assist in this resolution?
- (JE) involvement of getting national policies in place. Laboratory strengthening initiatives in place with national policies.
- (KN) Most PICTs will need consistent push to implement policies. WHO cannot be present in all countries. Consultancy resulted to development of draft policies has not been a solution so far. TWB may play an important role in ensuring that a representation is there to push policies forward.
- (Sala) An outline of what we can do in-country as a TWB in pushing these policies can be developed.
- (JE) When visiting countries, follow up on the progress of draft policies and spend time looking at it. It needs money, financial resources to do this.

3. Animal health and human health collaboration

- Elva Borja gave a brief on status of animal health laboratory capacity in the region. Currently there are 4 Level 1 laboratories capable of collecting and packaging samples for overseas testing; 4 Level 1 laboratories with ELISA testing capacities; 3 established Level 2 sub-regional animal health laboratories (4 including NC LNC in Paita).

- LabNet meeting resolutions

- Inform each other with country visits and major activities in-country.

- Recommending to PPHSN Coordinating Body to develop a letter encouraging countries to push/progress national policies.
- Other business
 - ✓ No further discussion. Sala ended the meeting with appreciation. Participants are requested to end the calls.
 - ✓ one-on-one discussion between Sala and Dr. Kim on Vanuatu