

TWG Subgroup Meeting

Brief Report

Sub-group:.....Care and Treatment.....

Date:.....Oct 10, 2005.....

Venue:.....PACT Office, 342 Nghi Tam Road, Tay Ho, Hanoi.....

ChairpersonNguyen Thi Minh Ngoc, USAID.....

Major Discussion Points

1. Community-based care programs supported by CARE International (CARE, Nguyen Ngoc Thang)

The CORE Initiative has supported to build community action on HIV/AIDS for the period of Nov. 2004 to Sept. 2005 in 3 provinces: Hanoi, HCMC, and Quang Ninh with Bright Futures, Tue Tinh Duong (Buddhist Association), Sharing Club, and Xuan Vinh .

Achievements: 1621 people have received palliative care; 380 children have been supported; 56 people have been provided with vocational training; 2749 people have been reached by prevention activities.

CBOs and FBOs were built capacity building to strengthen the organizational structure and network, strategic planning, project operation and implementation, advocacy skills to local authority and donors, access to extra funding.

Challenges: Lack of capacity and experience to operate a project among grantees; Drug abuse exists among beneficiaries; Lack of support from local authorities; Stigma and discrimination in the community.

2. Palliative Care Rapid Need Assessment (MoH, POLICY, FHI, VCHAP/CDC, Dr.Do Duy Cuong/FHI)

An Palliative Care Rapid Situational Assessment (RSA) in Vietnam was conducted, including assessment availability and needs; identifying promising models; training; reviewing existing laws, policies, guidelines related to palliative care, opioid availability and control, in 5 provinces: Ha Noi, Hai Phong, Quang Ninh; HCMC; and An Giang.

Preliminary findings: pain and other distressing physical symptoms are common in people with advance AIDS, cancer; psychological suffering is common among people with AIDS and often is related to stigma and poverty; 3 major hospitals provided palliative care for cancer patients; some community-based palliative care services and are available in some areas; oral morphine to treat pain is not available; parenteral morphine is rarely available and rarely used when available; most interviewees felt that healthcare workers and family members can be trained to give morphine safely at home.

Next steps (per WHO recommendations): Analysis RSA data; Write report on RSA; Write national palliative care guidelines; Write national opioid control policy; Disseminate guidelines and policies; Provide training in palliative care in accordance with national guidelines; Support development of model palliative care programs.

3. Discussion on splitting ARV adult pills in pediatric treatment with participants from National Pediatric Hospital

With the open of HIV treatment sites, a considerable number of children with HIV have been registered but and the limited amount of syrup ARVs, the situation raised the need to have more pediatric ARVs with available resources by splitting adult tablets for children. Tablet splitting will help to save ARV syrup for small kids (under 12kg) who need exact doses of ARVs. This raised the question about with pill splitting, children can not get the exact doses as stated in the newly issued national HIV/AIDS treatment guidelines, thus, is it allowable? The participants have discussed with Dr.Duong Ba Truc of the National Pediatric Hospital on the issue. Dr. Truc confirmed that pill splitting was drug preparation, tried to have the doses as close as possible to the doses in the treatment guidelines, thus did not conflict with the regulations. Participants also discussed on the need to have a MoH practical guidance to standardize pill splitting with different forms, combinations of ARVs and Dr. Truc said it would be a possibility.

Other Business

- National AIDS Symposium from Nov 24-26, 2005, there will be a track for care and treatment.
- WHO will joint with MoH to host an Int'l Conference on Pediatric Treatment in December in Hanoi.
- Dr. Fujita of WHO was selected to chair this round and PACT is proposed to chair in the following round.

Date and Location of Next meeting

TBD