

October 2019 | News

Welcome...

to our CORDS October 2019 newsletter. CORDS is a program of Ending Pandemics, comprised of six regional networks, working to reduce and prevent the spread of diseases by exchanging information and best practice. Our vision is a world united against infectious diseases. Early detection of outbreaks helps keep disease transmission to its area of origin, which, in our increasingly mobile world, is vital to stopping life threatening diseases such as Zika, Ebola and Yellow Fever. The collective expertise of the CORDS networks and their close relationships with local communities facilitate timely detection and response to outbreaks.



"As we work across borders to stop outbreaks in their tracks, this partnership with the Fleming Fund is a powerful opportunity to establish common protocols across multiple sectors and to elevate One Health AMR surveillance globally."

Mark Smolinski, President, Ending Pandemics

The Fleming Fund
Regional Grants

COMMON PROTOCOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION GRANT

Ending Pandemics

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from the British people

Ending Pandemics awarded Fleming Fund Regional Grant on antimicrobial resistance

Ending Pandemics is delighted to announce that it is a 2019 recipient of a Fleming Fund Award engaging CORDS Network members in Southeast Asia, South Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa, West Africa, and Europe. This award enables the network to identify surveillance gaps and map the scope of human, animal, and environmental antimicrobial resistance (AMR). AMR poses a profound threat to global health and there is a knowledge gap about its geographical reach and effects.

The collective focus of CORDS will be to establish and sustain regional mechanisms for supporting AMR surveillance, and develop common protocols to support robust surveillance. Importantly, the activities of the CORDS networks will apply to the world; elevating CORDS activities to a global level of significance. A recently published paper in *Science* discusses the threat to the animal industry, highlighting antibiotic resistance in farm animals tied to global hotspots – the same hotspots represented within the CORDS network ([Van Boeckel, T. P. et al., Science, 365, eaaw1944, 2019](#)).

The Fleming Fund has a long history of supporting countries to get relevant AMR data in the hands of

decision makers, thereby optimizing the use of antimicrobial medicines. The Fleming Fund has entrusted a 2-year grant to CORDS. To be successful each CORDS disease surveillance network - APEIR, SACIDS Foundation for One Health, EAIDSNet, MBDS, MECIDS, and SECIDS – must provide leadership and local expertise. Working across sectors and boundaries, the Fleming Fund project will create group expertise and impact on awareness of AMR and knowledge through surveillance. This expertise may also translate into future funding and sustainability of the Networks.

“As we work across borders to stop outbreaks in their tracks, this partnership with the Fleming Fund is a powerful opportunity to establish common protocols across multiple sectors and to elevate One Health AMR surveillance globally”.

Mark Smolinski, MD, MPH
President, Ending Pandemics.



Ending Pandemics and the University of San Francisco join forces

Ending Pandemics would like to announce a new partnership with the University of San Francisco (USF) to support CORDS. Through this partnership we will implement activities which expand on our collaboration, apply a one health approach, and foster the sharing of best practices for innovations in surveillance. This partnership will also strengthen the foundation of CORDS and continue to build on our values.

During the first year of this collaboration, regional networks, USF faculty and graduate students will collaborate to organize four online joint learning sessions, also known as webinars. These webinars offer a regular opportunity for the partners to showcase their insights and discuss challenges on topics of their interest. The sessions will be shared beyond immediate network members to avail upcoming leaders in global public health to learn from the experiences of CORDS members. Topics might address aspects of science, policy, and/or practice of disease surveillance.

USF will engage teams of faculty and graduate students from the Schools of Public Health, Health Informatics and Public Administration. A USF faculty lead and selected students will provide technical assistance on webinar development and will support the networks to create the content for the virtual learning sessions. This collaboration goes beyond sharing lessons across networks. It has the potential to provide extended opportunities for training and expansion of the next generation of the global public health workforce as it engages with the CORDS trusted partnership.

Our vision is that this effort will lead to a new network model of shared stewardship among CORDS members in the future. Shared stewardship refers to each of the regional networks assuming responsibility for CORDS core functions and growing its capacity in infectious disease surveillance. These core functions include communications, virtual learning sessions, information sharing, project development, oversight, and evaluation. We look forward to your participation, stay tuned for more details.



MBDS host Avian Influenza outbreak, risk and response exercise

The Mekong Basin Disease Surveillance Consortium (MBDS), one of the six regional CORDS member networks, held an outbreak response and risk assessment exercise from the 14 to the 16 August 2019, in Banteay Meanchey Province in Cambodia.

The objectives of the meeting were fourfold:

- To strengthen cross border communication and coordination between the MBDS countries in outbreak investigation and response, focusing on Avian Influenza as a specific example.
- To conduct an exercise to simulate the transmission of Avian Influenza in Cambodia, Laos and Thailand.
- To test each country's ability to share information on disease outbreak transmission and the interconnectedness of Emergency Operation Centers.
- To test how the timeliness of the deployment of human and material resources effectively controls the simulated outbreak.

Attendees represented four of the MBDS member countries: Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam. This also includes delegates from the Cambodian Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, the National Institute of Public Health, and wildlife experts, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, based at the US Embassy's in Cambodia and Laos and FAO and WHO.

Feedback from participants demonstrated both the challenges and opportunities a public health emergency would provide, as well as the need for critical collaboration with relevant stakeholders following a One Health approach. As a result of the meeting the Mekong Basin network was able to establish a harmonized mechanism for cross-border surveillance and outbreak response and risk assessment that will be integrated into their existing information exchange.

For more information on MBDS visit www.mbdnet.org



South Asia Network develops a list of priority diseases during regional workshop

Ending Pandemics Director, Nomita Divi, recently ran a workshop in partnership with Sandia National Laboratories. The purpose of this workshop was for the eight countries in South Asia to develop a list of priority diseases for regional surveillance. Held in Paro, Bhutan, this meeting also trained participants on the PREP tool for exercise design which enables preparedness to be used regionally, as well as for their own national contexts. Key deliverables for the next year which emerged from this workshop include a network website and a repository of country capacities, disease factsheets for priority diseases, webinars for regional learning, and regular quarterly calls. The group also approved Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences, in Bhutan, as the first secretariat for this nascent network with the financial support of Ending Pandemics. Welcome to Sithar Dorjee, who has also been confirmed as the network coordinator. We look forward to further engaging this network within CORDS and are confident that this will continue to leverage our strength in numbers.



APRU, Global Health Conference, Hong Kong, rescheduled to 2021

The Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) and the School of Public Health of The University of Hong Kong have decided to reschedule the APRU Global Health Conference 2019 to 2021.

‘We are aware of the concerns of some foreign visitors about visiting Hong Kong at this particular time. As the Conference organisers, we are dedicated to curating a quality conference experience for all participants and have come to the conclusion that a smooth running of the event could be better assured at a later time.

The University of Hong Kong recognises the tremendous value of knowledge and experience exchange among international speakers and delegates on global health issues. In this regard, the University has agreed to host the APRU Global Health Conference again in 2021.

We sincerely apologise for any inconvenience caused. A full refund of the registration fee will be arranged by the end of 2019. More information pertaining to the refund procedures will be announced shortly.’

For further information visit <http://www.aprughc2019.org>

Impact of Environmental Changes on Infectious Diseases Conference, Singapore, 2020

A conference on the 'Impact of Environmental Changes on Infectious Diseases – Innovative Responses' is taking place from 3 to 5 June 2020, at James Cook University in Singapore. The event will consider the link between environmental and climate variations and changes on infectious diseases.

The deadline for abstract submission is 17 January 2020. Topics include climate change & infectious diseases (including vector borne diseases), environmental change, zoonoses and co-infection, biodiversity and infectious diseases and water-borne diseases/aquatic hazards & environmental change. For more information on the conference visit:

<https://www.elsevier.com/events/conferences/impact-of-environmental-changes-on-infectious-diseases>



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CORDS

Ending Pandemics
870 Market Street, Suite 528
San Francisco, CA, 94102

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