

C17 - Antiretroviral resistance surveillance

THAX0104 - A south-south collaborative network for HAART resistance surveillance and monitoring

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Issues: As access to antiretroviral treatment increases in developing countries, surveillance and monitoring of HIV drug resistance (HIVDR) is a growing concern. A unique network of early warning sites for HIVDR is being established, coordinating Asian and African efforts, with participation of public and private clinics and hospitals.

Description: Collaboration between AIDS Fonds, TREAT Asia and PharmAccess, supported by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has resulted in a new HIVDR program in Asia (coordinated by TREAT Asia) and Africa (coordinated by PharmAccess). Consisting of four integral components, including HIVDR surveillance, HIVDR monitoring paired with a clinical observational database and a quality assurance program, this program seeks to help build capacity for the monitoring of national antiretroviral treatment programs in both continents. Private and public HIV treatment centres from 15-20 sites in Asia and Africa participate. In Africa, both plasma and dried plasma spot samples will be collected and HIVDR determination will be performed in three reference laboratories across the continent. These laboratories are capacitated for HIVDR genotyping and linked to an international quality assurance system. African and Asian clinicians and lab technicians are trained in the management of HIVDR. Clinical and laboratory data are collected and analyzed through a secured web-based monitoring system. Results are coordinated with other HIVDR networks and disseminated through an international civil society forum.

Lessons learned: A unique Asian-African HIVDR surveillance network is being rolled-out, complementing similar efforts by WHO and others. The capacity to systematically collect HIVDR data will help the pertinent countries to make informed decisions on the selection of ARV's.

Recommendations: Timely building of capacity for measuring HIVDR in Asia and Africa is of importance, in light of the massive scale-up of HAART in those continents. The coordination of Asian and African efforts will provide unique and complementary insights in the development of HIVDR.
