

Books

A Global Strategy for Malaria Control

Pp. x + 30 (available in English; French and Spanish in preparation). SFr. 11/US \$9,90. Geneva: WHO. 1993. ISBN 92-4-156161-0.

Implementation of the Global Malaria Control Strategy

Report of a WHO Study Group on the Implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Malaria Control 1993 - 2000. Pp. v + 57. (available in English; French and Spanish in preparation). SFr. 10/US\$9. Geneva: WHO. 1993. ISBN 92-4-120839-2.

These two books released by the World Health Organisation are the result of a process that began in 1990 after a proposal that a ministerial conference on malaria be held to mobilise affected countries and the international community to intensify disease-control efforts. This proposal was the result of the seriously worsening malaria situation in the world, a situation exacerbated by the spread of drug-resistant malaria parasites. It is estimated that over 300 million people are threatened by malaria, 3 million get ill and 1 million die each year. Yet malaria is a curable disease.

After international consultations and inter-regional conferences during 1991 and 1992, a synthesis of consensus opinions on current standards for malaria control and the formulation of a global malaria control strategy were developed. During October 1992, ministers of health and other health leaders from 102 countries gathered in Amsterdam at the Ministerial Conference on Malaria to discuss and ratify this strategy.

Book 1. A Global Strategy for Malaria Control

The information in this book is briefly and succinctly presented and includes the important features of the world's current malaria problems. The Global Malaria Control Strategy is described, and attention is drawn to the profound difference in approach between countries now initiating programmes to control malarial disease, and those with long-standing, large-scale programmes of house spraying with insecticides.

Curative and preventive control activities are dealt with, followed by an outline of the epidemiological basis for selecting and targeting them. The need to develop a capability for operational research is highlighted so that programmes may be more effective and wastage avoided. The crucial challenge of training as a basis for local and national capacity-building is treated separately, and this is followed by a review of the main issues in strategy implementation. The concluding chapter sets down the main generic needs for action by national governments and international organisations. An appendix contains the ten points of the World Declaration on Malaria.

Book 2. Implementation of the Global Control Strategy

This book contains the report of a WHO study group constituted to provide guidance for the implementation of the Global Strategy for Malaria Control. This includes

recommendations for the development of health information systems (epidemiological and managerial) that will meet local and global requirements for planning, monitoring and evaluating malaria control programmes. Guidance on strengthening health services to enable provision of early diagnosis and treatment, and on the involvement of communities as partners in malaria control is included. Attention is drawn to the differing ecological, social and economic determinants of the disease that individual countries must take into account.

This report in their own words was aimed at health service administrators and programme managers, as well as international partners in health and development who have a role to play in malaria. The two books are concise, succinctly presented and essential reference material for the targeted group. They will also be of interest to those involved in health systems development.

L. Sharp

Treatment of Tuberculosis; Guidelines for National Programmes

Pp. VII + 43 (available in English; French and Spanish in preparation). Geneva: WHO. 1993. ISBN 92-4-154451-1. Order no. 1150397.

Now that South Africa is well and truly back in the international fold, the World Health Organisation is likely to have an important input into our health practices. This short handbook on guidelines for national tuberculosis programmes is to be welcomed since it contains important information set out concisely. The guidelines are based on experience gained from successful tuberculosis control programmes throughout the world and are intended to assist those responsible for running such programmes in establishing effective, standardised short-course chemotherapy regimens for the disease.

It is essential that short-course chemotherapy is standardised, and four recommended regimens are described, depending on the category of the patient. The regimens differ from those in use in South Africa because they are divided into an initial intensive treatment phase followed by a continuation phase. Alternative regimens suitable for HIV-positive patients are described. There is a chapter on guidelines for monitoring treatment response and drug toxicity; which gives useful tips on the management of toxicity. Other issues, including the evaluation of the programme, quality assurance of drugs, compliance and the cost of the recommended treatment regimens are also discussed.

Finally, there is a useful appendix on essential anti-tuberculous drugs. This short handbook retails for about R32 and can be thoroughly recommended.

P. A. Willcox