APEC LSIF holds Policy Dialogue to Attain Blood Safety and Sustainability in Asia-Pacific

03 October 2014 - The APEC Life Sciences Innovation Forum (LSIF) held a policy dialogue and workshop with the theme “Attaining a Safer and Sustainable Blood Supply Chain” last September 30 and October 1, 2014 at the Asian Institute of Management, Makati City, Philippines. The event was co-organized with the World Health Organization, the Philippine Food and Drug Administration of the Department of Health, and the AIM Stephen Zuellig Graduate School of Development Management.

LSIF members acknowledged that there exists a wide disparity in the level of access to safe blood among countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Thus, at the end of the two-day dialogue the APEC 2020 Blood Supply Chain Roadmap was formulated. Its aim is to build capacity of blood services, infrastructure and governance, as well as promote international blood safety and quality standards in APEC economies, in coordination with the private sector. LSIF members also proposed the establishment of a new APEC LSIF Center of Excellence for Blood Safety in order to support supply chain knowledge and best practice sharing and technical capacity building cooperation. It will be funded through contributions from APEC economies, academia and professional societies, the Red Cross, key international organizations and industry.

The policy dialogue and workshop brought together 150 representatives from 20 APEC economies, and experts from Europe and South Africa. The goal was to identify how APEC member economies can work together to build capacities of their blood services and quality standards for blood.

Dr. Kenneth Hartigan-Go, Director-General of the Philippine FDA and co-host of this policy dialogue, considered the activity a "game-changing event" as it has the opportunity to shape global health policy and save lives in the region; two goals that are worth pursuing.

Dr. Steve DeKrey, President of the Asian Institute of Management, gave the Welcome Remarks and commended the APEC-LSIF for taking the responsibility of pursuing this regional initiative in assisting APEC economies in addressing the challenges in efforts to attain safe and sustainable supply chain of blood in the region. He highlighted that AIM’s involvement is this kind of policy dialogue and workshop brings in the managerial component needed in the process of social, political, economic and technological development in the region. AIM’s contribution in the overall initiative would be to develop future leaders who can formulate innovative solutions for many of the development problems, including those problems in the health sector, that confront many countries.

Dr. Enrique Ona, Secretary of the Philippine Department of Health and Executive Board Chair of the APEC Life Sciences Innovation Forum was the Keynote Speaker of the event. He provided the context and need for holding a policy dialogue that looks at a critical challenge in the health sector. “The world is now seeing just how important a safe and adequate blood supply chain is to global health security,” He highlighted the
importance of looking at this issue and cited WHO’s statement that MDGs related to health such as reducing infant and maternal mortality rate, combating HIV AIDS, malaria and chronic and acute diseases cannot be achieved without adequate and safe supply of blood products. Thus, ensuring adequate, efficient access to clean and safe blood supply has become the cornerstone of developing health systems and public health in Asia-Pacific. The Secretary declared, “I firmly believe that blood supply chain – from sourcing, production, testing, regulating – has become an important aspect of health eco-system, but because this is neglected, it is high time that we place our collective wealth of knowledge and technology together and face the problems we need to solve, and diligently implement the programs in the service of our society.”

To set the tone for the policy dialogue, Dr. Diana Teo of the Health Sciences Authority presented the results of the pre-workshop survey conducted among APEC member-economies to understand the concerns related to ensuring blood safety and sustainability. The respondents from 10 of the 11 member-economies answered queries on status of blood safety and availability, presence of regulatory framework, and status of implementation of quality standards covering blood bank and blood utilization. They were also asked to assess the APEC LSIF Strategic Plan using the SWOT Analysis Framework and list down their countries’ national blood priorities.

The survey showed that all economies have some degree of testing criteria and implement donor qualification, and have or are generally working towards meeting demands for blood transfusion. Sixteen economies have centers of excellence (usually blood centers), while five did not have regulatory authority for blood safety and availability. Most economies have quality systems that cover blood bank and blood utilization. Most of the 20 economies mentioned the following as national blood priorities: donor recruitment, selection and better donor screening process; overall blood safety and availability; meeting demand for blood and plasma; and maintaining infrastructure, information technology and equipment.

Geni Neumann, Consultant for the Blood and Transplant Services of the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) provided an overview of blood systems in Asia-Pacific. She first presented WHO and PAHO initiatives in addressing various issues related to blood safety and sustainability as well as the blood safety status of countries in the Latin-America region which was based on the survey they conducted that asked about each country’s status of national plans, quality assurance, referral centers, operation norms, clinical guidelines, certifications among others. Some countries need to improve efficiency of blood processing, donation rate, number of voluntary, remunerated blood donors, and to reduce blood wastage. Ms. Neumann also presented the Plan of Action for the Universal Access to Safe Blood (2014-2019) that aims to promote universal access to safe blood through voluntary, non-renumerated to help save lives and improve lives of patients who need them.

Dr. Celso Bianco, President of the International Society of Blood Transfusion, talked about the need to build a safe and sustainable blood supply chain so patients can have timely access to safe blood, blood that is free from infectious viruses such as hepatitis and HIV. He declared, “Each step along the blood supply chain is critical—from the point of blood collection, blood testing and blood typing to the transfusion to the recipient.” He emphasized the need for collaborations between many actors - blood banks, hospitals, health ministries and regulators - so that there will be seamless flow of blood from donor-to-patient. Dr. Bianco concluded. “By working together, the public and private sectors in the Asia-Pacific are coming up with the right solutions but ultimately it will come down to implementation to ensure blood supplies sufficient to safeguard health and productivity in the world’s most populous region.”

The event was also a venue to present to APEC delegates the planned establishment of an APEC Center of Excellence (CoE) for Blood Safety, and get their ideas and comments (advantages and disadvantages) on how to put together, implement and start coalitions for the CoE. Once established, the Center would provide a long-term capacity-building framework for APEC developing economies to enhance safety and sustainability of blood supplies in the Asia-Pacific region.

Guest speakers from different APEC economies shared various concerns and opportunities in the blood supply chain – from sourcing, production, testing, regulating. Each presented their country’s or organization’s strategies and initiatives in bridging the gaps in blood sustainability and safety. Many are involved in knowledge exchange, policy dialogue, and capacity building. Some are assisting various organizations in improving their capacity to collect, test, and distribute safe blood and blood products; and in enhancing blood services, infrastructure, and governance. Others are involved in promoting regulatory cooperation as well as pushing for more harmonized standards for blood and blood products. Other organizations are also involved through research – documenting and sharing best practices on blood and blood products; examining the role of blood safety in preventing the spread of HIV, Hepatitis, other infectious and potentially pandemic diseases; and making the results available to support policy development.

Dr. Masahiro Satake
Deputy DG of Central Blood Institute
Japanese Red Cross Society
Overview of the testing strategy stages of the Japanese Red Cross and the JPC approach to donor recruitment in the era of aging population

Dr. Norma Martinez Ona
Department of Hematology Clinic
Victor R. Potenciano Medical Center, Philippines
Blood Safety and Sustainability in the Philippines

Gwendolyn T. Pang
Secretary General, Philippine Red Cross
Continuing Threats to Blood Safety; a Quality Perspective

Professor Elizabeth Arcellana-Nuqui
Consultant Specialist, Department of Health, Philippines
Blood Safety and Sustainability in the Philippines

Dr Faraizah Abd Karim
Deputy Director, National Blood Centre
Continuing Threats to Blood Safety, a Quality Perspective

http://development.aim.edu/blog/2014/10/apec-lsif-holds-policy-dialogue-to-attain-blood-s... 10/8/2015
Building Blocks and Challenges to Implementing a National Blood Program in Malaysia

Dr. Che Kit Lin
Chief Executive and Medical Director, Hong Kong Red Cross Transfusion Service Hospital Authority
Quality System Management in Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service – Organization Management and Standards

Ms. Merideth Smith
Quality Manager, New Zealand Blood Service
The New Zealand Experience: Quality Systems – Standards, Organizational Management, Documentation, Training and Assessment

Dr. Dao Nguyen Minh
Vice-Director of Quality Board, Vietnam Administration for Medical Services, Ministry of Health, Vietnam
Vietnam’s Experience in Developing a Quality System

Dr. Yuyun SM Soedarmono
Red Cross, Indonesia
Challenges of Centralization of Blood Services In Indonesia

Ms. Tasanne Sakuldamrongpanich
Red Cross, Thailand
Centralization of Blood Banking in Thailand

Ma. Victoria M. Abesamis, MD, MHA, FPSPO, FPPS
OIC-Executive Director, Philippine Blood Disease and Transfusion Center
Status of Blood Safety and Sustainability in the Philippines / Centralization & Regionalization in the Philippines of Blood Services Program

Dr. Pham Tuan Duong
Deputy Director, National Institute of Hematology and Blood Transfusion, Ministry of Health Vietnam
Regionalization or Centralization in Vietnam

Dr. Omar Sanchez Ramirez
Regionalizacion MoH, Mexico
Regionalization or Centralization of Blood Services in Mexico

Dr. Jimena Morales Ayala
National Center for Blood Transfusion, Mexico
Building Blocks and Challenges to Implement National Blood Program

Dr Merrilyn Mathias Manager
National Blood Transfusion Services
Managing a Blood Service in Papua New Guinea– Challenges

Dr. Pavel Trakhtman
Head, Department of Transfusion Medicine and Stem Cell Bank, Russia

Dr. Yasmin Ayob
National Blood Center, Malaysia
Quality Systems for blood screening programs and decentralization of blood screening centers in Malaysia

About APEC Life Sciences Innovation Forum

The Life Sciences Innovation Forum (LSIF) is a tripartite forum that engages representatives from the highest levels of government, industry and academia to create the right policy environment for life sciences innovation. It was established by APEC Leaders in 2002 and has since grown to become APEC’s leading initiative on health and health sciences innovation. Its guiding principles include transparency, meaningful dialogue with stakeholders and recognition of due process.

About the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, or APEC, is the premier forum for facilitating economic growth, cooperation, trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. It is an intergovernmental grouping that operates on the basis of non-binding commitments, open dialogue and equal respect for the views of all participants.

APEC has 21 members - referred to as "member economies" - which account for approximately 40 percent of the world's population, approximately 55 percent of world GDP and about 44 percent of world trade. Its Member Economies are Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Canada; Chile; People’s Republic of China; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; The Republic of the Philippines; The Russian Federation; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; United States of America; Viet Nam.
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