
GLOBAL
PROGRAMME
ON AIDS

AND
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

REPORT OF INFORMAL DISCUSSION
ON AIDS AND HEPATITIS B

GENEVA
16 DECEMBER 1988



WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

Report of informal discussion on AIDS and Hepatitis B

I. Introduction

An informal discussion on the possible interactions between human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and hepatitis B virus (HBV) and the implications for WHO programmes on AIDS and hepatitis B was held in Geneva on 16 December 1988. The list of participants is provided in Annex I. The discussion was chaired by Dr F. Deinhardt and Dr I. Gust served as rapporteur.

The participants agreed that of the parenterally transmitted forms of hepatitis, there is documented evidence for interactions between HIV and HBV or hepatitis delta virus, however no reports exist regarding an interaction between HIV and parenterally transmitted hepatitis non-A, non-B virus. Several recommendations were made regarding research priorities and operational aspects of collaborative work involving the relevant WHO programmes.

II. Research priorities

Priorities for research on HIV/HBV interaction include:

- A. Basic studies on the molecular interactions between the two viruses, including the role of HBV in regulating replication of HIV and the possibility of developing therapeutic substances which could inhibit the replication of both agents;
 - B. Clinical and epidemiological research to evaluate:
 - 1. whether intercurrent infection with either agent influences the outcome of infection with the other;
 - 2. the outcome of HBV immunization in HIV-infected children and adults, including both humoral and cell mediated immune responses;
 - 3. the influence of pre-existing infection with HBV on the outcome of infection with HIV;
 - 4. whether children born to mothers who are infected with both viruses have a worse prognosis or are more likely to be infected with either or both viruses than children born to mothers infected with HIV or HBV alone;
 - 5. the influence of therapy for HIV or HBV infection on the other virus;
 - 6. inter- and intra-group spread of HIV and HBV in groups infected with both viruses;
-

-
7. differences in transmission of HIV compared with HBV to susceptible children who live in households in which a parent or sibling is infected, through ongoing prospective studies.
- C. Operational research on the delivery of HBV vaccine in developing countries may ultimately be of importance for control of HIV;
 - D. Other research activities including the interactions between HIV and other blood borne hepatitis viruses (e.g., the outcome of hepatitis delta infection in HIV-infected intravenous drug users; the relationship between parenterally transmitted hepatitis non-A, non-B virus and HIV).
-

III. Operational aspects

Information on some of the above-mentioned research issues may already be available; the WHO Global Programme on AIDS and Hepatitis B programme of the Division of Communicable Diseases should identify relevant groups and collect data on these issues.

To the extent possible, clinical and epidemiological material collected in studies of HIV or HBV should be evaluated for possible use in answering research questions described above.

As laboratory tests for HIV and HBV infection utilize similar equipment, technology and skills, rationalization of test facilities may make the best use of trained staff and equipment and provide an opportunity to develop high quality, sustained laboratory services.

In the context of the Global Blood Safety Initiative, WHO should assist Member States to develop an integrated blood transfusion service which can provide blood free from the risk of transmission of infectious diseases.

As the requirements for safety vary from country to country, WHO should promote development of simplified laboratory testing methods which would test simultaneously for the several relevant infectious agents. In addition, WHO should develop an algorithm to assist policy makers in making decisions about which infectious agents should be included for screening blood donation programmes.

The WHO Global Programme on AIDS and the Division of Communicable Diseases will collaborate in considering the optimal methods for promoting work on the interactions between HIV and HBV.

Annex 1

List of Participants

Temporary Advisers

Dr F. Barin, Virology Laboratory, Bretonneau University Hospital, 37044 Tours Cedex, France

Dr P. Coursaget, Microbiology and Immunology Laboratory, Faculty of Pharmacy,
F. Rabelais University, 37042 Tours Cedex, France

Dr F. Deinhardt, Max von Pettenkofer Institute, 8 Munich 2, Federal Republic of Germany

Dr M. Ferguson, National Institute of Biological Standards and Control, Herts. EN6 3QG,
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Dr I. Gust, Fairfield Hospital, Fairfield, Victoria 3078, Australia

Dr H. Margolis, Chief, Hepatitis Branch, Division of Viral Diseases, Centers for Disease Control,
Atlanta, Georgia 30333, United States of America

Dr J. Ngu, University Centre of Health Sciences, Yaoundé, Cameroon

Dr G. Roelants, International Centre for Medical Research, Franceville, Gabon

Dr A.U. Toukan, Faculty of Medicine, Jordan University, Amman, Jordan

WHO Secretariat

Dr A. Andjaparidze, RA/CD, Regional Office for South-East Asia, New Delhi

Dr C.J. Clements, Expanded Programme on Immunization, WHO Geneva

Dr J. Esparza, Acting Chief, Biomedical Research unit, Global Programme on AIDS, WHO Geneva,
(Co-Secretary)

Dr Y. Ghendon, Microbiology and Immunology Support Services, WHO Geneva, (Co-Secretary)

Dr T. Hashimoto, Consultant, Division of Communicable Diseases, WHO Geneva

Dr P.-H. Lambert, Chief, Microbiology and Immunology Support Services, WHO Geneva

Dr G. Lopez, Global Blood Safety Initiative, Global Programme on AIDS, Health Laboratory
Technology, WHO Geneva

Dr J. Mann, Director, Global Programme on AIDS, WHO Geneva

Dr S. Osmanov, Biomedical Research, Global Programme on AIDS, WHO Geneva

Dr G. Torrigiani, Director, Division of Communicable Diseases, WHO Geneva

Dr T. Umenai, Director DPC, Regional Office for the Western Pacific, Manila

Dr R. Widdus, Programme Coordination and Development, Global Programme on AIDS,
WHO Geneva
