



IAPB COUNCIL OF MEMBERS MEETING
17 SEPTEMBER, 2013

AGENDA ITEM 1.2C: LATIN AMERICA REGIONAL REPORT

LATIN AMERICA REGIONAL REPORT

Significant Achievements

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Meeting in Quito, Ecuador to Draft New Regional Plan

PAHO organized a meeting in April in Quito, Ecuador with the regional Ministry of Health (MOH) representatives to analyze the advances made in the implementation of the regional Plan of Action for the Prevention of Avoidable Blindness and Visual Impairment, 2009 – 2013 (CD49/19) with the end objective to update the plan for 2014 – 2019, taking into consideration the new WHO global plan (WHA A66/11) for the prevention of blindness and visual impairment that was unanimously approved by the World Health Assembly in May. (This plan was driven by representatives from Mexico and Australia, and representatives from El Salvador, Panama, and Cuba additionally spoke in support). Forty people participated, including MOH representatives from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela. Also participating were representatives from national VISION 2020 committees from Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Uruguay; the WHO global program for the prevention of blindness; PAHO Washington; PAHO-WHO Ecuador; and advisors and primary partners of the PAHO, ORBIS, and VISION 2020 eye health programs. The meeting was sponsored by ORBIS, IAPB, CBM, and Fundación del Valle (Quito, Ecuador), who were all in attendance. A follow-up meeting is scheduled in the Caribbean in December to finish the outline of the updated regional plan.

National Planning Workshops

- A workshop to draft the national plan for the prevention of blindness in the Dominican Republic was held in Santo Domingo on June 3-5 with the attendance of 94 stakeholders, including the participation of V2020, ORBIS, PAHO, representatives of the MOH and local eye care programs, local Lions clubs, and the insurance and supplies industry, and with excellent press coverage. Recommendations were drafted to create a national committee of blindness prevention to oversee the implementation of the drafted national plan, which was based on both the 2009-2013 PAHO regional and the 2014-2019 WHO global plans.
- The first national committee for prevention of blindness was similarly organized for the first time in Bolivia, following the May 1 MOH Resolution #0742 that officially recognized the national committee. This important development is a testament to the work of the IAPB V2020 Ambassador Cristina Sanchez.
- A national workshop to update and advance the national plan in Lima, Peru also took place in August, and results of the meeting are forthcoming.

Research and Publications

- Nathan Congdon presented a poster on the PRECOG study at the ARVO in Seattle, WA. The study has now been published in inaugural edition of *The Lancet Global Health*.
- Two papers were published in the *Arquivos Brasileiros de Oftalmologia* in May: a study of the risk factors towards AMD in Argentina (Poster presented in ARVO 2013 also available on V2020 LA website (<http://goo.gl/PvmDX>) and another study on visual acuity and refraction by age for children of three different ethnic groups in Paraguay. A third study on the CSR in Argentina was also accepted for publication in this journal.
- The trachoma review was published in *The Scientific World Journal* this past May.
- We were invited to submit an editorial on V2020 to *Medical Hypothesis, Discovery, & Innovation Ophthalmology Journal*, a new international quarterly, peer-reviewed journal. The editorial was featured in an inaugural issue of the journal.
- The El Salvador RAAB report has been published on the MOH website of El Salvador. (Note: The RAAB in Honduras is ongoing. The RAAB in Argentina has commenced and is due to finish by the end of the year. The RAAB in Venezuela may be ready to start in September, pending MOH confirmation.)
- The new Spanish edition (vol. 5 no.13) of the Community Eye Health Journal was translated from the international issue focusing on glaucoma. Nine additional papers from various Latin American countries that were originally included in the Quarterly Bulletin on glaucoma count towards the regional contribution of this Spanish edition. This is the first journal edition that targets regional ophthalmologists and ophthalmology in general, and 8,000 hardcopies were distributed at the August Pan American Association of Ophthalmology meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Key Opportunities to Move Forward the Eye Health Agenda in the Region

PAHO Regional Meeting in Caribbean to Finalize New Regional Plan

PAHO is coordinating a meeting in the Caribbean in early December to finish up discussion from the April Quito meeting and to gain Caribbean input on the drafting of a new regional plan. An expert working group (to be determined) will next draft the new regional plan based on the recommendations and outline from the 2 regional meetings. A draft plan is expected in Quarter 1, 2014.

Fred Hollows Foundation (FHF) Research Proposal: Phase 2 Pilot Testing of Global Indicators in Latin America Region

A proposal request of \$87,000 has been submitted to FHF and ORBIS to establish a regional database to collect the new WHO WHA A66/11 Resolution and Action Plan Indicators with the collaboration of MOHs, VISION 2020 Committees, national professional societies and regulatory bodies, NGOs, and industry representatives in the pilot region of Latin America in 3 countries: Chile, Peru, and Honduras. The secondary objectives of this project are to evaluate the feasibility of data collection and the reliability of the indicators and adequacy of the metrics used to define the indicators. The final project evaluation will conclude with the validation of a research protocol to implement this project and collect data on indicators in other regions of the world.