
Conference Summary

Global Infectious Disease Policy

At the International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases 2002, held in Atlanta, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a document entitled, "Protecting the Nation's Health in an Era of Globalization: CDC's Global Infectious Disease Strategy," which describes plans for controlling infectious diseases worldwide. The document outlines global partnerships and measures for improving capacity for disease surveillance and outbreak response and for applying proven public health tools to the control of emerging infectious diseases over the next decade. In addition, the document calls for strengthening global initiatives for disease control, conducting applied research on diseases

of international importance, and building public health training and capacity worldwide.

International Emerging Infections Programs in various parts of the world will support the activities outlined in the global strategy document. The International Emerging Infections Program (IEIP), Thailand, is the first site in the network of IEIPs proposed in the plan. Through the IEIP network, modeled after the U.S. Emerging Infections Program, specialists will work with local ministries of health to support laboratory-enhanced, population-based surveillance for infectious diseases. Data from this surveillance will allow ministries of health to prioritize diseases, evaluate targeted interventions, and support global efforts to prevent and control disease. IEIPs will train local scientists and CDC personnel, provide diagnostic and epidemiologic resources when outbreaks occur, and serve as platforms for regional infectious disease control activities.

In December 2001, IEIP Thailand and the Southeast Asia Regional Office of the World Health Organization hosted a training course on anthrax, attended by 64 participants from 16 countries. In 2002, IEIP Thailand initiated an investigation of an increase in reported leptospirosis cases through a study of hospitalized patients with febrile illness. IEIP Thailand is planning studies of respiratory illness and encephalitis later this year; a second IEIP site will be launched soon.

The Global Infectious Disease Strategy document is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/globalidplan>. Supplementary materials are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod>. For a print copy of the strategy, send a request by e-mail to ncid@cdc.gov; or by fax to 404-639-4194; or contact NCID, Office of Health Communications, 1600 Clifton Road, NE, Mailstop C14, Atlanta, GA 30333 USA.

Eric D. Mintz

Conference Summary

Fifth Annual Conference on New and Re-Emerging Infectious Diseases

The fifth annual Conference on New and Re-Emerging Infectious Diseases was hosted on April 18–19, 2002, by the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). The conference featured 8 speakers and 35 poster presentations.

Recent Infectious Diseases

Beatrice Hahn (University of Alabama, Birmingham, AL) opened the conference with a presentation on the search for the origins of HIV. The evidence indicates that two simian immunodeficiency viruses (SIV), one from chimpanzees (SIVcpz) and the other from sooty mangabeys (SIVsm), crossed the species barrier to humans,

generating HIV-1 and HIV-2, respectively. Dr. Hahn stressed the importance of characterizing the prevalence, geographic distribution, and genetic diversity of naturally occurring SIV infections to investigate whether humans continue to be exposed to SIV and if such exposure could lead to additional zoonotic transmissions.

William Hueston (University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN) gave a personal account of how bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), appeared in Europe and how chronic wasting disease (CWD,—another transmissible spon-giform encephalopathy that affects elk and deer) is spreading across North America. The disease seriously affects the elk industry. CWD causes emaciation and eventually death. The disease has been endemic for decades in elk and wild deer populations in southeastern Wyoming, northeastern Colorado, and a small part of Nebraska. That infections on elk farms could spread the disease to wild populations of elk and deer is of concern and may affect the

hunting industry, especially in eastern states, which have large populations of white-tailed deer.

Bioweapons

Edward Eitzen (U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases [USAMRIID] Fort Detrick, MD) recounted the history of state-sponsored biological weapons programs and the emergence of bioterrorism by non-state participants in recent years. The various ways biological agents can be used as weapons and the potential routes of exposure were discussed as prelude to the medical effects of these agents and their effects on the health-care system. Medical countermeasures and other important responses to attacks with biological agents were highlighted, including priorities for the nation to be better prepared. After the anthrax attacks in Florida, New York, New Jersey, and Washington, DC, the threat of biological warfare became much more real; however, these attacks were not the first in the United States. Dr. Eitzen