

ARISE Covid Webinar

Afro- response to Covid –
what lessons have we learnt from others

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The challenge of haemoglobinopathies in resource-poor countries

Weatherall, British J Haematol, 2011, 154, 736–744

| Annual Global Births of Severe Disorders of Hemoglobin | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Total number of births* | | | | 464,590 |
| SCD | SS | | 333,929 (83.3) | 400,986 (86.31) |
| | SC | | 54,736 (13.6) | |
| | S β thal | | 12,321 (3.1) | |
| Thalassemia | β thal | β thal major | 23,329 (53.1) | 43,917 (69.0) |
| | | E β thal | 20,588 (46.9) | |
| | α thal | Hb H disease | 14,504 (73.7) | 19,687 (31.0) |
| | | Hb Bart's hydrops | 5,183 (26.3) | |
| | | | | 63,604 (13.69) |

*80 % born in low and middle income countries

AFRICA: COVID-19 – First Case

Africa's first COVID-19 case was recorded in Egypt on 14 February.

Since then a total of 52 countries have reported cases.

AFRICA: COVID-19 Update

| Country | Confirmed cases | Dead |
|----------------|------------------------|-------------|
| South Africa | 16,433 | 286 |
| Egypt | 12,724 | 645 |
| Algeria | 7,201 | 555 |
| Morocco | 6,972 | 193 |
| Nigeria | 6,175 | 191 |
| Ghana | 5,918 | 31 |
| | | |
| Lesotho | 1 | |

AFRICA: COVID-19 Update

African countries start easing COVID-19 confinement measures

30 April 2020

When COVID-19 emerged as a global health threat, African countries were quick to enact public health measures to slow the spread of the virus. Now as some countries begin to ease lockdowns, it is important to maintain strong surveillance, case finding and testing among other control measures to halt the pandemic.

AFRICA: COVID-19 Update

New WHO estimates: Up to 190 000 people could die of COVID-19 in Africa if not contr...

07 May 2020

Eighty-three thousand to 190 000 people in Africa could die of COVID-19 and 29 million to 44 million could get infected in the first year of the pandemic if containment measures fail, a new study by the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Africa finds. The research, which is based on prediction modelling, looks at 47 countries in the WHO African Region with a total population of one billion.

AFRICA: COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 could deepen food insecurity, malnutrition in Africa

14 May 2020

The World Health Organization (WHO) today expressed concern at the potential impact of COVID-19 on food security, which is likely to exacerbate the already considerable burden of malnutrition in Africa. The impact of the disease is expected to be greater among those grappling with food scarcity and malnutrition, while widespread food insecurity will likely increase due to movement restrictions.

Ghana COVID-19 Update

Confirmed Cases and Treatment Outcomes as at 17th May 2020

| Category | Number of cases | Recovered | Critical / Moderately Ill | Dead |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| General Surveillance | 1,827 | 1,754 | 5 | 31 |
| Enhanced Contact Tracing | 3,976 | | 0 | 0 |
| Quarantined cases (Tamale & Accra) | 115 | | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 5,918 | 1,754 | 5 | 31 |

Management of Sickle Cell Disease in Ghana

- SCD Treatment Centers – 18
 - Located in 5 of now 16 Administrative Regions
- Newborn Screening for SCD
 - National Policy in place since 2011; very slow scale-up
 - Only 3% of newborn screened annually
 - Newborn with SCD provided penicillin prophylaxis and comprehensive care
- SCD not specifically covered in National Health Insurance Scheme
- 2019: Major Partnership established with Novartis
 - Hydroxyurea: 11 of 18 Centres organized into a special treatment program
 - Management Guidelines, development of additional Centres
 - Training of Healthcare Professionals
 - Advocacy

COVID-19 management: organizational challenges for SCD

- Survey of SCD treatment centres was done at 8 out of 11 centres in Ahodwo Programme, a Ghana-Novartis Hydroxyurea (HU) for SCD treatment group
- Locations – 3 regions out of the 16 administrative regions in Ghana
- Total number of SCD patients - ~ 23, 664

Challenges

- Most of the Centres for SCD are also COVID -19 treatment centres.
- Shut down and scaling down of clinics in the hospital
- Lockdown, social restrictions, difficulty in travelling, financial constraints(job loss).

Effect of COVID-19 Management on SCD Clinical Care

- **Routine Visits - Clinics**
- Routine outpatient clinics have either been suspended or scaled down in most centres.
- Special considerations for OPD visits made for patients on HU
- Helplines available for patients
- More telephonic consultations being done now
- Parental visits encouraged without the child for hydroxyurea prescription

Routine Visits – Laboratory tests

- Laboratory request forms for next visit given to parents when they come for refill
- Those who don't come to the clinic for refill have the request forms sent electronically
- Patients sent to the dedicated laboratory centre
- Lab results and requested investigations sent by parents to dedicated phone numbers for review.
- **Patients needing interventions asked to come to hospital**

Routine Visits - Pharmacy

- Pharmacy working normally but parents advised to go for their drugs without the child
- Refills for HU and other medications now being given at longer intervals to limit hospital visitation

Acute Illness

- Only SCD children who are sick come to the clinic to be seen.
- Acute illness visits have 24 hours access at the Emergency Room.
- Prior to ER visit, they are encouraged to call hotlines to be assessed
- Patients who visit ER are either admitted if really needed, or treated and discharged.
- Low index of suspicion for COVID-19 with increased testing - patients with fever, new onset cough or persistent cough, neurological symptoms (Take cultures, antibiotics and screen for ACS)

AFRICA: COVID-19 Update



**Medical and Research Advisory Committee
Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc.**

Recommendations for Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparedness

**Health Alert for People with Sickle Cell Disease
and their Caregivers**

This document will be updated if more information is available.

AFRICA: COVID-19 Update



Sickle Cell Disease and COVID-19: An Outline to Decrease Burden and Minimize Morbidity

**Medical and Research Advisory Committee
Sickle Cell Disease Association of America
(Adapted for Sub-Saharan Africa)**

This document will be updated weekly as data and evidence emerge.

- **THANK YOU**