Global call for action to ensure universal access to malaria diagnosis and treatment

March 2017, Geneva, Switzerland

Background

Between 2000 and 2015, great progress was made in extending the coverage of malaria diagnostic testing and treatment (with appropriate antimalarial medicines). Despite this progress, current estimates suggest that large gaps in programme coverage remain, although data are limited. A better understanding as to why these gaps occur, who is affected by these gaps, and what strategies can be used to overcome them will help to ensure that there is universal access to care and that the targets outlined in the Global technical strategy for malaria, 2016–2030 are met.

Objectives

- To characterize the access to and utilization of malaria diagnostic testing and treatment services at country level, and to identify bottlenecks in service provision (e.g., global supply, access to health facilities, availability of staff and equipment, supply management of commodities, etc.);
- To identify particular population subgroups or risk factors associated with the gaps and the role played by the different delivery channels used to provide services (i.e., public sector, private sector, community-based programmes);
- To review existing datasets and methods used to estimate access to malaria diagnostic testing from routine health management information systems (HMIS) and from health facility and household surveys, and to provide clear methodological recommendations for strengthening the surveillance of malaria testing and treatment;
- To identify effective strategies to increase the access to and utilization of diagnostic testing and treatment services, and to elaborate a global response plan.

Work envisaged

1. Literature review: Consult recent peer-reviewed publications and technical reports to prepare a review paper on current access to malaria diagnosis and treatment, including major determinants and gaps. The review will address particular population groups or risk factors associated with gaps in the delivery of services in the public and private sector and through community-based programmes.

2. Data analysis: Analyse data on the coverage of malaria diagnostic testing and treatment, particularly from: i) household survey data on diagnostic testing and treatment (especially those surveys where it is possible to link data on history of fever,
treatment-seeking behaviour and treatment received in relation to malaria test results); ii) health facility survey data on malaria diagnostic testing and treatment; iii) routine HMIS of malaria-endemic countries; and iv) expenditures on and the procurement and distribution of commodities. The paper will review gaps in the evidence and, based on the available data, estimate coverage and examine bottlenecks in the delivery of services.

3. Economic analysis: Review the economics of increasing access to diagnostic testing and treatment, by (i) considering the limitations to the supply of and demand for services, and how these can be modified to achieve a more optimal equilibrium; and (ii) examining the costs of alternative strategies.

These three background papers should reflect important regional differences and be prepared in close consultation with WHO Regional Malaria Advisers. They will be shared with all participants 2 weeks prior to the consultation and will serve as the basis for developing a draft global action plan for mobilizing key stakeholders.

4. Consultation with key stakeholders: Consult key stakeholders involved in the provision of malaria diagnostic testing and treatment services, including:

- Representatives of relevant ministry of health (MOH) programmes (essential medicines, malaria, community services, surveillance and central medical stores) from multiple malaria-endemic countries from all WHO Regions;
- Representatives of technical and funding agencies and NGOs working with MOH programmes to improve access and reporting on malaria diagnostic and treatment services, including in the private sector.

Method of work during the WHO Consultation

a. Analysis of the current situation, determinants and risk groups, based on plenary discussions of the two working papers, with the objective of completing the landscape analysis (Day 1);

b. Working groups on effective strategies for a global response plan to ensure universal access to malaria diagnostic testing and treatment, reflecting different regional/health system contexts (Day 2);

c. Presentation, discussion and consolidation of the main components of the draft WHO global response plan to ensure universal access to malaria diagnostic testing and treatment and to meet the targets set in the Global technical strategy for malaria, 2016–2030 (Day 3).

End product and WHO endorsement of the draft recommendations

Based on the input received from all participants and the WHO Secretariat, the Rapporteur of the meeting will finalize the draft WHO global plan to ensure universal access to malaria diagnostic testing and treatment. The draft will be submitted to the Malaria Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) for review and endorsement.

WHO Secretariat of the Technical Consultation

Joint activity between PDT Unit and SEE Team (Drs Bosman and Cibulskis)
## Proposed timelines

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<td>February–August 2017</td>
<td>Preparation of pre-reads</td>
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<td>November 2017</td>
<td>WHO Consultation</td>
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<td>February 2018</td>
<td>Finalization of Global Action Plan</td>
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<td>March 2018</td>
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<td>25 April 2018</td>
<td>Launch of call for action: World Malaria Day</td>
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<td>May–July 2018</td>
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