SAGE Working Group on Varicella and Herpes Zoster Vaccines

DRAFT Terms of Reference

The Working Group will be asked to review the evidence, identify the information gaps, and guide the work required to address the information gaps and formulate proposed recommendations in preparation for a SAGE review of the use of varicella and herpes zoster vaccines. This will then lead to an updating the current (1998) varicella vaccine position paper.

The Working Group will specifically be asked to identify and review:

1. data regarding the global prevalence and burden of disease caused by varicella and herpes zoster according to country development status
2. issues related to varicella and herpes zoster surveillance
3. the safety and effectiveness profile of varicella and herpes zoster vaccines including that of vaccine combinations such as MMRV
4. the duration of protection following immunization
5. the impact of co-administration of varicella and herpes zoster vaccines with other vaccines
6. the impact of varicella vaccination of immunocompromised individuals
7. country experiences with introduction and use of varicella vaccines (in countries with information that allows a robust analysis)
8. the potential for widespread childhood vaccination to reduce natural boosting through varicella virus circulation in the community and increase the risk of zoster in the adult and elderly population
9. evidence on the cost-effectiveness of different approaches, in particular in low and low-middle income countries (as per WHO guidelines)
10. additional critical issues that need to be considered in updating the current vaccine position paper.

The review of vaccine safety will consider a review by the Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety, and that on cost-effectiveness will link with the Immunization and Vaccines related Implementation Research (IVIR) Advisory Committee (formerly known as QUIVER).

The formulation of recommendations will be evidence-based and follow the principles set in the GUIDANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EVIDENCE-BASED VACCINE RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS and available at http://www.who.int/entity/immunization/sage/Guidelines_development_recommendations.pdf

Expertise needed in:

Varicella and herpes zoster
   General epidemiology, including virus transmission, risk factors for complications and virus reactivation, and regional differences in epidemiology

Varicella and herpes zoster vaccines
   Immunogenicity and efficacy of available vaccine products
   Economic analyses and modelling of impact of varicella and herpes zoster vaccine use