Publication News

https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/312316/9789241210287-eng.pdf

The WHO ECSPP advises the Director-General of WHO in the area of medicines quality assurance. The Expert Committee oversees the maintenance of The International Pharmacopoeia and provides guidance for use by relevant WHO units and regulatory authorities in WHO Member States, to ensure that medicines meet unified standards of quality, safety and efficacy. The Expert Committee’s guidance documents are developed through a broad consensus-building process, including an iterative public consultation phase. Representatives from international organizations, state actors, non-state actors, pharmacopoeias and relevant WHO departments are invited to the Expert Committee’s annual meetings, to provide updates and input to the Committee’s discussions.

At its 53rd meeting held from 22 to 26 October 2018 in Geneva, Switzerland, the Expert Committee heard updates on cross-cutting issues from other WHO bodies, including the ECBS, the Expert Committee on the Selection and Use of Essential Medicines, local manufacturing, the programme working to combat AMR, the Member State mechanism on substandard and falsified medical products, the INN programme and the RSS unit. Updates were also presented by partner organizations, including UNICEF and the PDG and by the IAEA.

Progress updates on quality control activities were presented by the EDQM as the custodian centre in charge of ICRS for use with monographs of The International Pharmacopoeia. Briefings were also provided on the outcomes of the Ninth International Meeting of World Pharmacopoeias, which was co-hosted by WHO and Viet Nam, and on the results of proficiency testing studies conducted in Phase 8 of the WHO EQAAS.

Progress updates were provided on prequalification of medicines, APIs and quality control laboratories, and on completed and planned surveys to monitor the quality of medicines circulating on the markets of Member States.

The Expert Committee reviewed new and revised specifications and general texts for quality control testing of medicines for inclusion in The International Pharmacopoeia (1). The Expert Committee adopted 9 guidelines and 12 pharmacopoeial texts (2 general chapters, 10 new and revised monographs), and confirmed the release of 8 new ICRS established by the custodian centre for ICRS and two for use in connection with The International Pharmacopoeia.
The decisions and recommendations made by the Expert Committee at its 53rd meeting in 2018 are listed next.

The following guidelines and decisions were adopted and recommended for use:

- Procedure for the development of World Health Organization medicines quality assurance guidelines (Annex 1) (new)
- Interpretation of Guidelines on heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems for non-sterile pharmaceutical products (Annex 2) (new)
- Good manufacturing practice: guidelines on validation:
  - General main text (Annex 3) (revision)
  - Analytical procedure validation (Annex 3 – Appendix 4) (revision)
  - Validation of computerized systems (Annex 3 – Appendix 5) (revision)
  - Guidelines on qualification (Annex 3 – Appendix 6) (revision)
- Proposal to waive in vivo bioequivalence requirements for medicines included in the EML – set of priorities agreed
- Pilot study 3 of new API data and classifications confirmed
- Protocol to conduct equilibrium solubility experiments for the purpose of Biopharmaceutics Classification System-based classification of active pharmaceutical ingredients for biowaiver (Annex 4) (new)
- Guidelines on import procedures for medical products (Annex 5) (revision)
- Good practices of national regulatory authorities in implementing the collaborative registration procedures for medical products (Annex 6) (new)

For inclusion in The International Pharmacopoeia
The following general texts were adopted by the Expert Committee:
- Workplan 2018–2019

General chapters
- 2.2.3 Limit test for heavy metals (revision)
- 5.5 Dissolution test for solid oral dosage forms (revision)

Monographs
For medicines for maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health
- estradiol valerate
- ethinylestradiol

For antituberculosis medicines
- moxifloxacin hydrochloride
- moxifloxacin tablets

For antiviral medicines, including antiretroviral medicines
- daclatasvir dihydrochloride
- daclatasvir tablets
For medicines for tropical diseases
- albendazole (revision)
- ivermectin
- ivermectin tablets

For ophthalmological and dermatological medicines
- Tetracycline hydrochloride (revision)

International Chemical Reference Substances
The Expert Committee confirmed the release of the following ICRS that have been newly characterized by the EDQM, the custodian centre:
- trimethoprim ICRS 2
- mebendazole ICRS 2
- sulfamethoxazole ICRS 2
- capreomycin sulfate for identification ICRS 1
- cycloserine ICRS 1
- methylthioniunium chloride ICRS 1
- ritonavir ICRS 3
- clindamycin hydrochloride ICRS 1.

The Expert Committee also authorized the following reference substances, established by the EDQM for use according to the respective monographs in *The International Pharmacopoeia*.
- moxifloxacin for system suitability CRS
- albendazole for system suitability CRS

Recommendations
The Expert Committee made the recommendations listed below in the various QA-related areas. Progress on the suggested actions will be reported to the Expert Committee at its 54th meeting in October 2019.

The Committee recommended that the Secretariat, in collaboration with experts as appropriate, should take the actions listed next.

The International Pharmacopoeia
- Continue development of monographs, general methods and texts and general supplementary information, including radiopharmaceutical monographs developed by the IAEA, in accordance with the workplan and as decided at the meeting

Quality control – national laboratories
- Continue offering the EQAAS, including to those laboratories participating in the prequalification process
Good manufacturing practices and related areas
- Develop a revised text for the “cleaning validation”, to bring it in line with new developments
- Develop a new comprehensive text on Good distribution practices, including the elements of WHO Good storage practices and other related guidance texts, such as the Guidelines for inspection of drug distribution channels
- Revision of the text on Quality system requirements for national GMP inspectorates
- Develop a document, e.g. as “points to consider”, on environmental aspects relating to manufacturing for the prevention of AMR, to possibly include the role of inspectors
- For water for injection: update the current monograph in The International Pharmacopoeia on WFI and the related GMP text, to allow other technologies for production of WFI in addition to distillation
- Develop a new text on Good chromatography practices

Distribution
- Initiate the development of new guidance on the determination of shelf-life requirements for the supply and procurement of medicines

Regulatory mechanisms
- Continue the updating process for the WHO certification scheme on the quality of pharmaceutical products moving in international commerce, with a subgroup and active involvement of Member States
- Continue the drafting of the new guidance document to support and facilitate the implementation of quality management systems for national regulatory authorities
- Continue the development of good regulatory practices
- Start the next phase of the WHO Biowaiver Project, on the BCS- based classification of the second set of APIs from the EML, in accordance with the newly adopted criteria for setting priorities, using the regulatory and experimental pathways
- Update the listing of stability conditions required for marketing authorizations in WHO Member States

Other
- Update the WHO/UNFPA guidance texts serving the prequalification of condoms, in close collaboration with colleagues in WHO and UNFPA
- Continue the revision of the Guidance on representation of graphic formulae for medicines
- Continue to provide the database of terms and definitions covered by this Expert Committee on the WHO website.