Call for Proposals

Research on challenges and opportunities for pharmacovigilance in low- and middle-income countries

Deadline for submission: 27 September 2019, 13:00 GMT

TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, hosted at the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, is pleased to announce a Call for Applications to support research on the challenges and opportunities for pharmacovigilance in low- and middle-income countries.

Under this call, two or three research teams are expected to be selected for funding for a maximum amount of US$ 50 000 each.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

While huge efforts have been made worldwide to improve patients’ access to treatments, adequate safety monitoring systems are still weak and adverse drug reactions reporting rate remain low in many low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

Though guidance has been issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) to help programme managers establish a safety surveillance system (1, 2), many LMICs lack a robust system and tools at the community level for collecting in an efficient and reliable manner information on drug safety.

New tools, in particular m-health tools, have been proposed as a way of improving reporting of safety information. But despite encouraging results, scale up of new strategies has been slow and reporting rate remains low.

Implementation research is needed to better understand the causes of low reporting rate and determine effective and sustainable methods for safety monitoring, as part of a broader system of pharmacovigilance in health programmes.

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE CALL

The overall objective of the call is to generate understanding of the problematic of underreporting of adverse events in LMICs and how new tools and approaches could improve drug safety monitoring.
Examples of area of research considered under this call:

- Understanding the bottlenecks and challenges to pharmacovigilance and reporting of adverse events in LMICs, in particular at community levels and/or within public health programmes;
- Evaluation of the sustainability of new and innovative approaches to improve the quality and effectiveness of safety monitoring systems (e.g. use of mobile technologies and online reporting tools);
- Evaluation on how best to embed drug safety within national health systems;
- Identification of ways to improve coordination and collaboration between the national control programmes and national pharmacovigilance center in countries.

The research should be conducted in low- and middle-income countries over a period of 6 to 9 months, and the project completed within 12 months of initiation.

FUNDING SCOPE

The funding is available for research only. Funds, for a maximum amount of US$ 50 000 per proposal, may be requested to support costs attributable to the study, including research staff time, and direct costs for study activities.

SELECTION PROCESS

The candidates will be selected following an open competitive call for applications. The applications will be evaluated based on scientific merit, relevance innovation and feasibility of the project.

Final protocols will need to be approved by the WHO Ethics Review Committee and relevant local research ethics committees before funds can be made available and projects can start implementation.

WHO SHOULD APPLY? ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Lead institution/organization should be based in a LMIC;
- Principal investigators must be based in the country where the project will take place;
- Research teams are encouraged to engage with the country national pharmacovigilance center while developing their proposal.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants are requested to use the TDR research grant application form for their submission. CV of the principal investigator should be included as annex to the submission.

Applications must be submitted online using the WHO DataCol portal form found on this link: https://extranet.who.int/datacol/survey.asp?survey_id=4057

User name: CALLPV2019
Password: TDR2019

Deadline for submission of proposals: 27 September 2019, 13:00 GMT.

Applications can be submitted in English or French. Note: if the application is submitted in French, the applicant should provide, in addition, a one page executive summary of the research project in English.
Additional application information:

- An active email address is required to use this portal. A confirmation email will be sent to this address to acknowledge successful submission. Only one application may be submitted by each team or individual. Multiple submissions will not be processed. Information and documents to be uploaded are stated in the online application form. Applicants are advised to prepare the supporting documentation prior to starting the submission process.
- Applicants are advised to avoid last minute submissions as this could overload the system or fail due to internet connectivity problems. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.
- Please contact Ms Ekua Johnson (johnsone@who.int) if you encounter technical difficulties during the completion and submission of the application form. Please mention “Call PV 2019” in the subject of your message.

For further information on the call, please contact:
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**REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING**

1. Assuring safety of preventive chemotherapy interventions for the control of neglected tropical diseases: practical advice for national programme managers on the prevention, detection and management of serious adverse events, WHO 2011
2. The safety of medicine in public health programmes: pharmacovigilance an essential tool, WHO 2006