



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

AMAZON MALARIA INITIATIVE PARTNERS TO PRESENT AT AMERICAN SOCIETY OF TROPICAL MEDICINE AND HYGIENE ANNUAL MEETING

WASHINGTON, DC — The Amazon Malaria Initiative (AMI) has announced that its technical and country partners will be presenting their findings and achievements at the 2010 American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) meeting in Atlanta, GA. November 4-7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) US Pharmacopeia (USP), and

CDC and PAHO representatives will co-chair a symposium titled ‘Current Status of Malaria Drug and Diagnostic Resistance in South and Central America.’ At the meeting, the participants will discuss status and issues related to antimalarial drug resistance and deletion of the histidine-rich protein 2 and 3 (HRP2/3) genes in *Plasmodium falciparum* in South and Central American countries.

“In South America, artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) was introduced for the first time almost a decade ago after *in vivo* efficacy studies revealed high rates of treatment failure with either chloroquine or sulphadoxine-pyrimethamine,” said Venkatachalam (Kumar) Udhayakumar, Chief of Genetics and Immunology Laboratory Research and Development Unit Malaria Branch at CDC. “Chloroquine remains the primary choice for the treatment of *P. falciparum* in Central American countries north of the Panama Canal and the Caribbean. In this symposium, *in vivo* and molecular surveillance data relevant to the current policies including any new trends will be presented.”

US Pharmacopeia will offer the poster presentation on the Three-Level Approach for Ensuring the Quality of Medicines in Resource-Limited Countries. “By strategically implementing this approach throughout the supply chain, from procurement to patients’ use, health authorities may increase the frequency and number of medicines tested within their limited financial and human resources, resulting in more effective control of the national pharmaceutical market and the quality of medicines,” says the presentation abstract.

AMI is a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) initiative to collaborate in malaria prevention and control with Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Suriname, the countries members of the Amazon Network for the Surveillance of Anti-malarial Drug Resistance (RAVREDA, its acronym in Spanish). AMI support has contributed to decreasing morbidity and mortality at the national level, and in the Amazon Basin. According to PAHO’s interactive malaria statistics data, malaria cases in AMI countries have declined by almost 50% and mortality rates by an average of 69%. (<http://www.paho.org/malariastats>, accessed October 13, 2010.)

AMI partners include PAHO, CDC, USP, Management Sciences for Health (MSH), Links Media, and Research Triangle Institute (RTI).

For more information on USAID, please visit www.usaid.gov. For more information on AMI, please visit www.usaidami.org. For more information on PAHO and Malaria Day in the Americas, please visit www.paho.org/malaria

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