

Dear friends,

Greetings!

I do hope that all of you are well. As per the usual practice of communicating on the last day of even-numbered months of the year, please find below details of events/activities, since the last communication.

1. Activities/ Actions during VII HTAi Annual Meeting, Dublin

1.1 A Special Networking Session on issues related to developing countries, was jointly organized by the DC ISG with the support of WHO and WHO Collaborating Centres Network. This was held on Sunday 5th June 2010. For the first time, it was videographed and has been made available at the HTAi website, through the courtesy of the WHO. Please see the websites for complete deliberations.

<http://www.htai.org/index.php?id=412>

1.2 A network of Latin American HTA institutions/organizations presented another Special Networking Session, on issues related to HTA (development, promotion and utilization) in South American countries. Details are available with Dr. Alexandre Lemgruber.

1.3 Several oral and poster presentations were presented on issues related to developing countries. I request individual presenters and organizers to kindly share details of the same.

1.4 The DC ISG Annual Meeting was held as per schedule; details of the deliberations have been circulated by email on June 14th 2010.

2. WHO-HTAi Memorandum of Understanding

2.1 The much-awaited Memorandum of Understanding between HTAi and WHO, which is expected to boost HTA and related activities in developing countries, was signed on 5th June 2010 at the conclusion of the Special Networking Session (mentioned above). Dr. Laura Sampietro-Colom and Dr. Adriana Velasquez signed the document on behalf of the respective organizations.

I am hopeful that the MoU will translate to concrete actions and not remain a piece of paper. However, it has been made clear that WHO will most likely not provide logistic or monetary support, but rather facilitate contact with key leaders in developing countries, provide letters of support if required, and technical assistance when feasible.

3. Activities held

Health Technology Assessment Institute (IATS) Brazil, together with 8 leading Universities, organized a five-day workshop on Advanced Studies in HTA, at Porto Alegre (Brazil) during 28 June to 2 July 2010. This workshop was designed to promote understanding and advance discussion in key areas of health technology assessment and related research topics, such systematic review, health economics, ethics, education and decision making policy to senior investigators members of IATS, Graduate students of affiliated Universities and Collaborators from National Health Care System in Brazil (SUS). Details are available at: http://www.iats.com.br/eng/noticiaDetalhe.php?id cms_news=23

Singapore hosted a regional HTA meeting together with NICE from 17-20 Aug 2010, providing the opportunity for Asian faculty to meet and work with faculty from NICE.

Details are available at: <http://phom-singapore.org/scientific-schedule.asp>

4. Forthcoming activities

4.1 The World Health Organization is organizing the First Global Forum on Medical Devices from 9-11 September, 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Details are available at the following site: http://www.who.int/medical_devices/gfmd/en/

4.2 HTAi's Latin America Regional Meeting is being held in Buenos Aires on 21-22 October 2010. This is organized jointly by the Health technology Assessment International (HTAi) and IECS, with the support of the Health Ministries of Argentina and Brazil, and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

For details, please see the following sites:

<http://www.htai.org/index.php?id=417>

http://www.iecs.org.ar/iecs-visor.php?cod_producto=602

5. Reaching out to colleagues in Africa

Along the sidelines of the HTAi Annual Meeting in Dublin, I had the opportunity to make contact with Dr. Paul Revill (who works with and within the Ministry of Health in Malawi) and Dr. Bona Chitah (from Zambia). Discussing the failure of the previous efforts to kick-start HTA development in Africa, we agreed to try another initiative along the following frame-work:

1. Identify the key persons to work with in Malawi and Zambia: Paul and Bona
2. Prepare a letter to be sent out to them demonstrating HTAi and WHO support: Joseph

3. Get local leaders in the two countries enthused.
 4. Prepare a more detailed technical document to initiate sensitization of health functionaries.
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6. Update of SIGNET training programme in India

The SIGNET programme (HTA capacity building effort in India with assistance from Singapore) has entered its second year. Training workshops have been held as per schedule; and individual participating institutions have undertaken short-term (12 months duration) projects to apply the knowledge and skills acquired. The next series of training is scheduled from 1-4 November 2010 at Singapore.

As on all previous occasions, I would greatly appreciate your inputs/thoughts/comments that will help in building upon the work in progress.

With best regards,

Joseph L. Mathew

Chair, HTAi DC ISG

31 August 2010.