

Building confidence in prequalified vaccines — Accelerated access to vaccines

A platform for collaboration and technical exchange on laboratory control of vaccines

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Vaccination is one of the most cost-effective health interventions. Efficacious vaccines are available to prevent life threatening diseases and it is paramount to ensure their consistent quality. One of WHO's roles is facilitation of access to needed vaccines and safeguarding the efficacy, safety and quality of vaccines used by UN agencies in national immunization programmes by their prequalification.

The scope of WHO activities spans from creation of standards and evaluation of a candidate vaccine to the monitoring of field performance and compliance with WHO standards during the whole life cycle of prequalified vaccines.





The WHO vaccine prequalification team (PQT) through a network of contracted National Quality Control Laboratories (NQCLs) organizes independent testing and quality monitoring to ensure that prequalified vaccines purchased through UN agencies adhere to the highest standards of quality. There are currently twelve laboratories performing technical testing of vaccines on behalf of WHO PQT. These laboratories are subject to a PQT qualification.

The first WHO Meeting of "Global Vaccines Quality Control Laboratories" will bring together the national vaccine quality control laboratories of 25 countries producing WHO prequalified vaccines, as well as other stakeholders interested in vaccine quality control.





The focus of the meeting will be on national strategies for official lot release procedures. Participants will be able to learn about country-specific lot release procedures, increase their understanding of vaccine control strategies and join working groups for in-depth discussion of selected topics.

Terms of Reference for the first WHO-RIVM Global Vaccine Quality Control Laboratories Networking Meeting

MEETING OBJECTIVES

-  To strengthen the network of NQCLs involved in testing of WHO prequalified vaccines to build common understanding to testing standards, to reduce redundant testing and contribute to more cost-effective testing
-  To exchange information on applied control strategies of NQCLs for vaccines and explore potential for more extensive sharing of work and information
-  To bring together
 - experts from national quality control laboratories (NQCL) involved in testing of prequalified vaccines to facilitate future networking and communication
 - stakeholders such as WHO and other UN organizations, manufacturer associations, EDQM, donors to facilitate common understanding on vaccine quality assurance by WHO and vaccine producing countries
-  To discuss the following topics in working groups:
 - Best practices for prequalified vaccine lot release process (including minimum technical testing to be performed annually by the releasing NQCL)
 - WHO vaccine lot test report form (what is and should be behind the WHO certificate / form)
 - Design and mechanisms for information sharing
 - Between WHO and NQCLs
 - Amongst NQCLs / NRAs / stakeholders
 - Confidentiality
 - The need for a WHO Global Vaccines Quality Control Laboratories Network and its “Terms of reference” including
 - Objectives
 - Activities (including 3R initiatives)
 - Membership / Participation
 - Management
 - Continuity

MEETING OUTCOMES

-  Established contacts between experts from NQCLs involved in testing of prequalified vaccines for scientific and technical exchange on vaccine testing
-  Overview of applied strategies of vaccine quality control by individual NQCLs
-  Meeting report (including outcome of the working groups and the way forward)
-  Position on the future collaboration within the WHO Global Vaccines Quality Control Laboratories Network and - if applicable - its “Terms of Reference”