Support to country level decision-making: NITAGS & GNN

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Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals
From vaccine development to use

Safety, efficacy, quality
- Product development
- Licensure by functional authority

Effectiveness, safety
- Cost-effectiveness
- Impact, Integration

SAGE recommendation & WHO position

Regional and country recommendations

WHO prequalification

Vaccine procurement
- Gavi support

Vaccine introduction and use

Regulatory guidance

Programmatic suitability

http://www.who.int/immunization/policy/WHO_vaccine_development_policy.pdf?ua=1
Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization

- Principal advisory group for vaccines and immunization
- Global normative role
- Reports to Director-General
- 15 Members
- Public call for nominations
- Two plenary meetings/year
- Meetings and standard operational procedures
- Periodic declaration of interests
- Working Groups
- Report and communications
### Review of Topics discussed at SAGE Meetings, 2010-2017

Total # of meetings: 17  Total # of sessions: 169

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<th>Topic</th>
<th># sessions</th>
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<td>DoV/GVAP</td>
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<td>Surveillance</td>
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WHO Immunization Policy Advisory Framework

Global
- Technical analysis and guidance
- Standards
- Global research
- Vaccine design
- Global policy recommendations and strategies
- Support regional/national challenges

Regional
- Regional policies and strategies
- Identify and set regional priorities
- Monitor regional progress

National
- National Policies and Strategies
- Prioritize problems and define optimal solutions
- Implement national programme and monitor impact
Global Vaccine Action Plan

Indicator SO 1.2: presence of an independent technical advisory group that meet defined criteria

Target: Functional NITAGs in all Member States by 2020

Definition of Indicator: a NITAG is considered functional when it meets all six process indicators.

1. Legislative or administrative basis for the advisory group.
2. Formal written terms of reference.
3. At least five different areas of expertise represented among core members.
4. At least one meeting per year.
5. Circulation of the agenda and background documents at least one week prior to meetings.
6. Mandatory disclosure of any conflict of interest.
Recognizing the importance of NITAG support

GVAP midterm review (2016)

• Good progress but additional efforts are needed to achieve GVAP 2020 target on NITAGs;

70th World Health Assembly (2017)

• Urges Member States to demonstrate stronger leadership and governance of national immunization programmes by strengthening national processes and advisory bodies for independent, evidence-based, transparent advice including on vaccine safety and effectiveness;

• Requests the Director General to support Member States in strengthening NITAG to inform national decisions based on national context and evidence to achieve national immunization goals;

71st World Health Assembly (2018)

• NITAGs, while supporting decision-making, can contribute significantly to building in-country ownership and credibility for immunization programmes.
Fig. 4.1: National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs) in 2016

- 83 countries meeting the six NITAG criteria
- 122 countries having a NITAG with administrative or legislative basis
- 122 countries reporting the existence of a NITAG with terms of reference
- 129 countries reporting the existence of a NITAG


2017 WHO secretariat assessment report
### Building up capacities at global, regional and country levels

#### Global
- Global resources:
  - NITAG Resource Centre
  - Guidelines and training materials
- Networking & collaboration
  - Global NITAG Network (GNN)
  - Peer learning, and exchanges with SAGE
- Support to Regional Offices
  - Support to regional networks
  - SAGE-RITAG interactions
- Funding

#### Regional
- Support regional NITAG networks
- Invite NITAGs to RTAG meetings
- Sub-regional trainings for NITAG strengthening
- Sub-regional collaboration between small countries
- Regional competencies and centres of excellence

#### Country
- Ad hoc support to NITAG establishment and strengthening
- Share workplans, recommendations and best practices
- Peer to peer exchanges to build capacity
- NITAG Evaluation
Main objective: to be the one-stop-shop for all NITAG related information

- Launched in 2015, managed and run by WHO HQ with the support of a network of focal points
- Centralized access to NITAG recommendations from around the world
- Systematic reviews, scientific publications, technical reports
- Updates from partners and upcoming immunization events

Target audience:

- NITAG members looking at specific topics and wanting to see the decisions of other countries
- Partners involved in NITAG support: all training material are available

Next steps:

- Expand content, assure quality, increase functionality

http://www.nitag-resource.org/
The Global NITAG Network (GNN)

Open to all NITAGs
The GNN vision, mission and objectives

VISION: Each country, using the best practices and data available, makes sound, evidence-based recommendations on immunization that are most appropriate for their context in order to facilitate their adoption and implementation.

MISSION: To enhance the ability of NITAGs to efficiently make evidence-informed recommendations on immunization through global collaboration and cooperation with input from regional networks.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide a global platform to enable NITAGs to efficiently share and access knowledge, technical reviews, data, lessons learned, trends and innovations.
2. To liaise with regional NITAG networks to flag needs, develop relevant tools to address needs, and identify, evaluate, and document best practice and innovation. GNN does not replace regional networks.
3. To help develop standards for processes to ensure evidence-based decision making and evaluate NITAGs.
4. To facilitate evaluations and capacity building of NITAGs.
5. To advocate for NITAGs.
Based on 2017 survey, two discussion technical items identified:

1. Off label recommendations of vaccination
2. Legal context for implementation of NITAG recommendations

Conflict of interest: experiences, lessons learned and best practices

NITAG evaluation: feedback from countries

NITAG agenda priority setting

Side session for long-established NITAGs and recently established NITAGs
Key messages

- Immunization is leading in the field of evidence-based decision-making in public health.
- Global normative guidance is only as good as it shows impact at country level.
- Global – Regional - Country level collaboration is therefore essential for vaccine decision-making.
- NITAG’s have been identified as a centrepiece to advance the immunization agenda, and there is overall good progress.
- Country level evidence based decision making in increasingly important as vaccine policy choices increase.
- Allocation of scarce resources will face increased scrutiny in countries graduating from Gavi subsidies, and evidence-based decision-making will increase sustainability and ownership.
- Partner technical support and predictable financial support will be essential to successfully drive establishment and fostering of NITAGs.
Many thanks

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