A regional workshop on strengthening quality management systems for parasitological diagnosis of malaria took place in Muscat, Oman, from 17 to 21 September 2011. Malaria diagnosis is important for case management and malaria surveillance. The lack of, and the poor quality of, parasitological diagnosis represents a big challenge for malaria surveillance in high-burden countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region. It is a major obstacle that hinders the collection of reliable malaria incidence data for proper evaluation of interventions. The objectives of the workshop were to:

- review status of access to parasitological diagnosis of malaria and develop strategies to achieve universal coverage of confirmation
- review country experiences on quality assurance for microscopy and rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs)
- update countries on the news of the WHO manual for quality assurance, guidelines on procurement and supply management, and RDTs
- discuss current experiences on the microscopy accreditation programme and development of a regional system for external competency assessment of malaria
 - review experience on, and discuss establishment of, the regional malaria slide bank.

All participating countries of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region have recognized the need to accelerate universal access to malaria diagnostic testing as a key component of national efforts to ensure quality of care, reduce pressure on antimalarial medicines, improve efficiency and strengthen the malaria surveillance system.

Both microscopy and RDTs have major roles in ensuring that all suspected malaria cases are confirmed: each test has characteristics that make them useful, particularly in clinical situations. In all settings, both microscopy and RDTs require an effective quality management system in place to ensure the accuracy and reliability of malaria diagnostic testing.

Wednesday 10th of April 2024 07:19:00 AM