

## **Asia Fungal Working Group.**

The Asia Fungal Working group has been formed to improve fungal diagnostics in Asia and gather fungal surveillance data to support best practice in the region. At present the group has representatives from China, India, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Australia. Other Countries from the region are also expected to participate. The committee meets twice a year (I missed the May meeting) and the next meeting is scheduled for December in Singapore. The Asia Fungal WG group plans to established two key initiatives:

### **1. Medical Mycology Training Network (MMTN)**

The group proposes to organise an annual educational series of workshops to provide Asian clinicians and microbiologists/mycologists with advanced theoretical and practical training on diagnostic techniques in medical mycoses.

The first Medical Mycology Training Network (MMTN) workshop was held in Taiwan in December 2009. This was a 3-day medical mycology workshop. The program consisted of lectures and laboratory practicals covering both practical and clinical aspects of identifying and diagnosing fungal infections. The target audience was laboratory-based scientists, medical microbiologists and infectious disease specialists (see attached program). Participants came from China, Taiwan, Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, India, Hong Kong et al.

A second 2.5 day mycology workshop, including laboratory practicals will be held this year 30 November – 2 December 2010 in Singapore, just before the WPCCID Conference (see draft program – some speakers still to be confirmed).

The venue for the 2011 workshop has not yet been decided.

### **2. Fungal surveillance program**

A research program to advance the understanding and surveillance of fungal infections in Asia, to provide local practitioners with important data to help support the highest standards of care.

The group is currently establishing a Fungal surveillance program. A draft protocol and case report forms are being developed (I am attaching a draft protocol in confidence). This is a complex study because it involves many countries.

The primary objective of this study is to: Determine the epidemiology of fungal infections in Asia through a survey of fungi isolated from clinical specimens submitted to hospital laboratories. This study would involve centres in many countries. Pfizer will initially provide funding to support this project.

**ISHAM's role: As this group is a multi-national working group, it need's an international umbrella organisation like ISHAM work under (it would be difficult for this to be organised by a single country Society). ISHAM would have to receive unrestricted education and/or research grants from pharma sponsors,**

**and then re-distribute this to the participating centres in the different countries (this could be done by electronic transfer 1 or 2 times a year, following correct approvals for payments from the principle investigators of the study).**

**I believe this is the key issue that ISHAM would have to agree to?**