

International Rectal Microbicides Working Group (IRMWG)

Monthly Teleconference

March 7, 2007

Present: Marc-André LeBlanc (IRMWG SC Secretary, Global Campaign for Microbicides, Canada), John Shaw (IRMWG SC member, USA), Rowena Johnston (IRMWG SC member, amfAR, USA), Robert Reinhard (USA), Judy Auerbach (AIDS Foundation of SF, UDA), Kim Mulji (IRMWG SC Treasurer, NAZ Foundation International, UK), Shaleena Theophilus (Canadian AIDS Society/MAG-Net, Canada), Gavin XXX (XXX), Linda Hughes (Polydex Pharmaceuticals, USA), Leonardo XXX (XXX), Courtney Mulhern-Pearson (AIDS Foundation of SF, USA), Rev. R.J. Hadley (USA), Jessica Terlikowski (AIDS Foundation of Chicago, USA), Deidre Grant (AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition, USA), Ed Fuchs (USA), Manju Chatani (IRMWG SC member, African Microbicides Advocacy Network, Ghana), Bridget Haire (IRMWG SC Vice-chair, Australian Federation of AIDS Organizations, Australia).

1. Marc-André welcomed participants and thanked amfAR for sponsoring this call as well as presenting on this call.
2. Rowena presented an outline of research projects related to rectal microbicides and anal intercourse that amfAR has recently announced, using her slides as guide. Supplementary information to the slides is included below.

Rowena started by stating that the funding started in January 2007, and covers either one-year or two-year projects. She advises that since she has not received permission in all cases to use the photos, please be mindful of this if you copy them.

Slide 2: This funding is in the context of the overall amfAR research mission. This round of funding falls within that.

Slide 3: These are questions through which we can frame the research that has been funded. In other words, the 8 projects have been funded to answer the six questions posted here. The goal is really for amfAR to fill the gap that is not being filled by other funders, so it is not necessarily about product development.

Slide 4 presents a question that has been identified as being of particular interest to this group, and concerns modelling.

Slide 5 presents the young researcher working on a mathematical modelling. She proposes to do this in LA county.

Slide 10: The participant's own semen is mixed with lymphocytes and virions and then they measure where it all goes.

Slide 17: Existing devices have too large volumes. We need an acceptable and standard device, ideally across trials.

Discussion

Many participants congratulated amfAR for the variety of projects they are funding. There were probably approximately 70 applicants to the fund. While there is no guarantee that other funders will pick up this research after the first year, amfAR grantees often get NIH funding. These funding bodies really serve different functions.

Some participants raised other topics that would likely need to be researched, including looking at behavioural data and practices that might have an impact on relative risk and distribution of semen and RMs, including fisting, enemas, douching. Some people pointed out that an enema might eventually serve as a possible vehicle to deliver a RM. A paper on osmolarity of lubes was recently posted to the list.

Jessica Cohen mentioned that she is involved in research being conducted around applicators, namely getting researcher perspectives on the characteristics that are needed in applicators.

There was discussion of the amfAR Trek in which Rowena is participating, and it was agreed that we will use the IRMWG network to attempt to raise funds for rectal research. If through our network we can raise half of Rowena's \$10,000 goal, the entire \$10,000 will be earmarked specifically for rectal research.

3. Announcements:

- Please disseminate announcements and links to the lube survey. It is now available in six languages.
- Many thanks again to amfAR and Rowena for hosting this call!!!

4. Next call: March 30, 2007 on RMs, media and communications, hosted by the Canadian AIDS Society and presented by Roy Wadia from the BC CDC. The call will be available through the web.