

NEWSLETTER # 33 – January 2006

PHARMACIENS SANS FRONTIERES COMITE INTERNATIONAL

New format and new look for our monthly newsletter. We hope that you like it, and that delivery is successful. Your comments are welcome.

EVENTS

Educational initiatives for medical and pharmacy students about drug promotion

This very interesting study points out the limited amount of time and lack of importance allocated to drug promotion in medical and pharmacy education. And this stands in stark contrast to the large volume of drug promotion targeting health professionals. Results are based on 228 respondents from 64 countries.

http://www.who.int/medicines/areas/rational_use/haipromosurvey.pdf

The World Health Organization (WHO) has demanded that 18 pharmaceutical companies stop selling “single-drug” artemisinin malaria medicines to prevent malaria parasites from developing resistance to this drug. Artemisinin should be used only in a cocktail with other drugs and treatment should be continued for 7 days to prevent resistance occurring.

This is a legitimate concern in view of the fact that malaria is one of the three biggest killer diseases in the world (between 1 and 2 million deaths per year). If resistance to artemisinin occurs, we will no longer have an effective cure for malaria.

On the issue of drug resistance, the U.S. health authorities are urging GPs to prescribe Tamiflu and Relenza only in the most severe and potentially fatal forms of flu. Indeed, 91% of the 120 virus samples tested in the country this flu season were resistant to the two drugs.

This year, **Pharmagora** will be held on 1-3 April in Paris (Paris-Expo, Porte de Versailles).

www.pharmagora.com

Mali:

At the end of January, the government adopted a law setting the price of 107 generic drugs on the national list of essential drugs. This is expected to reduce overall costs by 31.5%.

MISSIONS

Indonesia

The French subtitled version of the documentary filmed in Indonesia on inappropriate drug donations is now available and an English subtitled version is being edited.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Christophe Marquet, Head of Operations in Africa, will be in the DRC from 31 January to 16 February to supervise the two programmes currently underway in the country (Katanga and Eastern Kasai). Jérôme Schell, Logistics Officer, will be there with him from 7-21 February. Their objectives are to monitor the activities carried out in 2005, meet all partners to outline a development strategy for the coming years and to evaluate logistics monitoring.

Niger

The project to support the Regional Directorate of Public Health in Agadez in implementing its health development plan has been submitted to donors. The project aims to ensure sustainable

access to quality essential drugs and improved traditional drugs for the 368,229 inhabitants of the Health Region of Agadez.

Expanding access to quality health care is a major challenge for Niger. Among the key health indicators in the country, the morbidity and mortality rates (especially among infants, 124‰ and young children 247‰) are very high and partly attributable to infectious and parasitic diseases associated with malnutrition in children.

Cambodia:

“All has changed from my employment with PSF to today”.

Tom is working as a Peer Leader with Pharmaciens Sans Frontières- CI in Phnom Penh. For three years, he has written sketches and organised choreographies to disseminate messages on Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV prevention. He also trains and supervises a dozen PSFCI staff on how to conduct education sessions.

This ‘bad guy’ in the past has become an example to his peers and is recognised as a positive influence on those who know him.

“I did not know my father. He left my mother when I was very young. Then she had another husband, but he beat me, he was violent. Then at the end of primary school, I left the house and went to live with the prostitutes.”

Tom still has several tattoos of flames and dragons made during dark and confused times in his past.
“I did that without reason, often under the influence of drug. I used to absorb huge quantities of drugs during this period: heroin, Yaba (amphetamine) and alcohol. I did crazy things. I slept with many girls and all the time without condom, it was madness! I made several HIV tests which fortunately were all negative.”

Today, he does not take drugs anymore. An avid dancer, he has started up a modern dance club and today about thirty young people take part in his courses.

“I started to dance very young. (...) I was even a ‘trainer’ in the festivals or the marriages.”

The former ‘bad guy’ is now happy:

« I have a family, a formidable woman, a son, a work with PSF ad a dance school with the young people of the Building. Now I am able to see my future, before there was no future.”

In compliance with the French data protection act in the law of 6 January 1978 (CNIL), you have the right to access and correct information about yourself. You can exercise this right by writing to PSF-CI Service informatique 4 Voie Militaire des Gravanches 63100- Clermont-Ferrand (France)