

CIAN: « Innovating to Fight Tuberculosis in the Context of COVID19 in Africa »

On Tuesday, October 6, 2020, Erick Maville, Director General, Corporate Health (SEE), President of the CIAN Health Commission, organized a webinar on the Topic: "Innovating to fight tuberculosis in the context of VIDOC in Africa".

Speakers:

- Linda Betroune, Global Marketing Director, QIAGEN ;
- François Jung, Manager Private sector engagement, GLOBAL FUNDS;
- Éric Fleutelot, Technical Director, Health Department - Major Pandemics Division, EXPERTISE FRANCE
- Isabelle Villadary, Head of Malaria and Tuberculosis - Global Health Programs, SANOFI

During the webinar, the speakers began by making an overview of the current situation, then highlighted the challenges ahead with respect to latent tuberculosis and finally discussed the solutions to fight the pandemic of covid-19.

Overview of the situation:

- Nearly a third of the world's population is contaminated by the tuberculosis bacillus.
- Vulnerable population (Children, adult smokers, people living with HIV, migrant workers, health workers...)
- High-risk workplaces: confined environments, mines, cement plants, factories, construction sector, health care institutions, prison centers, etc.)

Challenges:

- Provide appropriate treatment for latent and sickly tuberculosis (medications)
- Accompanying a development plan
- National programs must have strategies and policies that support all dimensions of tuberculosis control to achieve its goals.
- OMS is planning a strategy to eradicate tuberculosis by 2035 with different indicators and break the chain of transmission
- Promotion and access to testing, access to medical treatment for multi-resistant tuberculosis
- Better management by health care institutions, which sometimes become places of contamination themselves.

Solutions:

- World Economic Forum in Davos: a call for mobilization has been launched for a workplace diagnostic campaign
- Digitization and use of new technologies for a more reliable database (number of people infected and number of people tested and treated).
- Setting up aid programs (managing financing, improving health practices and policies)
- New testing techniques for children (more frequent mortality rates) and new management program for pediatric tuberculosis
- Encourage companies to set up their own tuberculosis control programs (encourage testing, develop in-house solutions).
- QIAGEN, a leader in latent infections, is designing a new medical device (blood test). Innovative in terms of durability, reliability and rapidity of results, this test, adapted to emerging countries, promotes the accessibility of screening.

- SANOFI is working on improving treatment coverage in collaboration with the CDC (Emerging Infectious Diseases) by reducing the duration of treatment to improve adherence (protocol of a weekly dose for 3 months).
- Development of an advanced training program for health personnel (6 modules available in several languages: care, practice recommendations, etc.).
- The BIT and the OMS are working for the commitment of companies (seeking a better assessment of the risks of employee exposure, integrating a health policy...)

Synergy with COVID-19

- The need to combine the response to COVID19 with that of tuberculosis.
- Drawing inspiration from new types of diagnosis
- The importance of communication that brings people to screening (media, advertising, social networks...)
- The roles of the technology industry in epidemiological surveillance systems to better understand health information systems ("track and trace" systems, monitoring systems, data access)
- Mobilizing populations in awareness raising and case finding contact
- Barrier gestures
- Vaccine issues (immunization programs to be integrated into country strategies)

Date to remember:

- FORUM November 6: Corporate social responsibility: what corporate social responsibility for the company after the current health crisis.
- 10 December: next CIAN health commission: feedback on the management of the health crisis (intervention of the Ministry's crisis unit and some companies)