

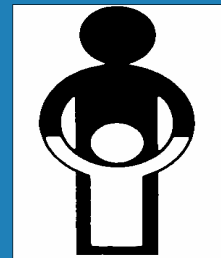
Review of the WHO Hepatitis A Position Paper: need for an update?

Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board
Antwerp, Belgium; 12 March 2009

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WHO Geneva



**World Health
Organization**



WHO Vaccine Position Paper

- What is a WHO Position Paper?
 - concerned primarily with use in large-scale immunization programmes
 - vaccination for individual protection not emphasized
 - summarize essential background information
 - conclude with current WHO position concerning use in global context
 - reviewed by experts inside and outside WHO
 - designed for use mainly by national public health officials and immunization programme managers
 - published in Weekly Epidemiological Record and on website
- How are PPs produced?

WHO vaccine position papers

- Process started in 1998
- For each vaccine preventable disease
- Position papers = **Key reference documents**
 - Now available in all official languages
 - Convergence of other WHO documents (International Travel and Health, Essential Drugs List, WHO Model Formulary,.....)
- Evolution towards cross cutting papers or other policy documents, e.g. vaccination of immunocompromised,...
- On-line catalogue of WHO Policy Recommendations
www.who.int/immunization/documents/en

Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals

WHO > Programmes and projects > Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals

 [printable version](#)

Vaccine Position Papers

BCG

- [Position paper \(January 2004\) Original English and French versions \[pdf 174kb\]](#)
- [Arabic translation \[pdf 174kb\]](#)
- [Chinese translation \[pdf 267kb\]](#)
- [Russian translation \[pdf 289kb\]](#)
- [Spanish translation \[pdf 142kb\]](#)
- [References \[pdf 83kb\]](#)

- [Revised BCG vaccination guidelines for infants at risk for HIV infection \[pdf 190kb\]](#)
- [Chinese translation \[pdf 190kb\]](#)
- [Russian translation \[pdf 267kb\]](#)
- [Spanish translation \[pdf 43kb\]](#)

CHOLERA

- [Position paper \(April 2001\) Original English and French versions \[pdf 156kb\]](#)
- [Arabic translation \[pdf 196kb\]](#)
- [Chinese translation \[pdf 155kb\]](#)
- [Russian translation \[pdf 171kb\]](#)
- [Spanish translation \[pdf 44kb\]](#)
- [References \[pdf 109kb\]](#)

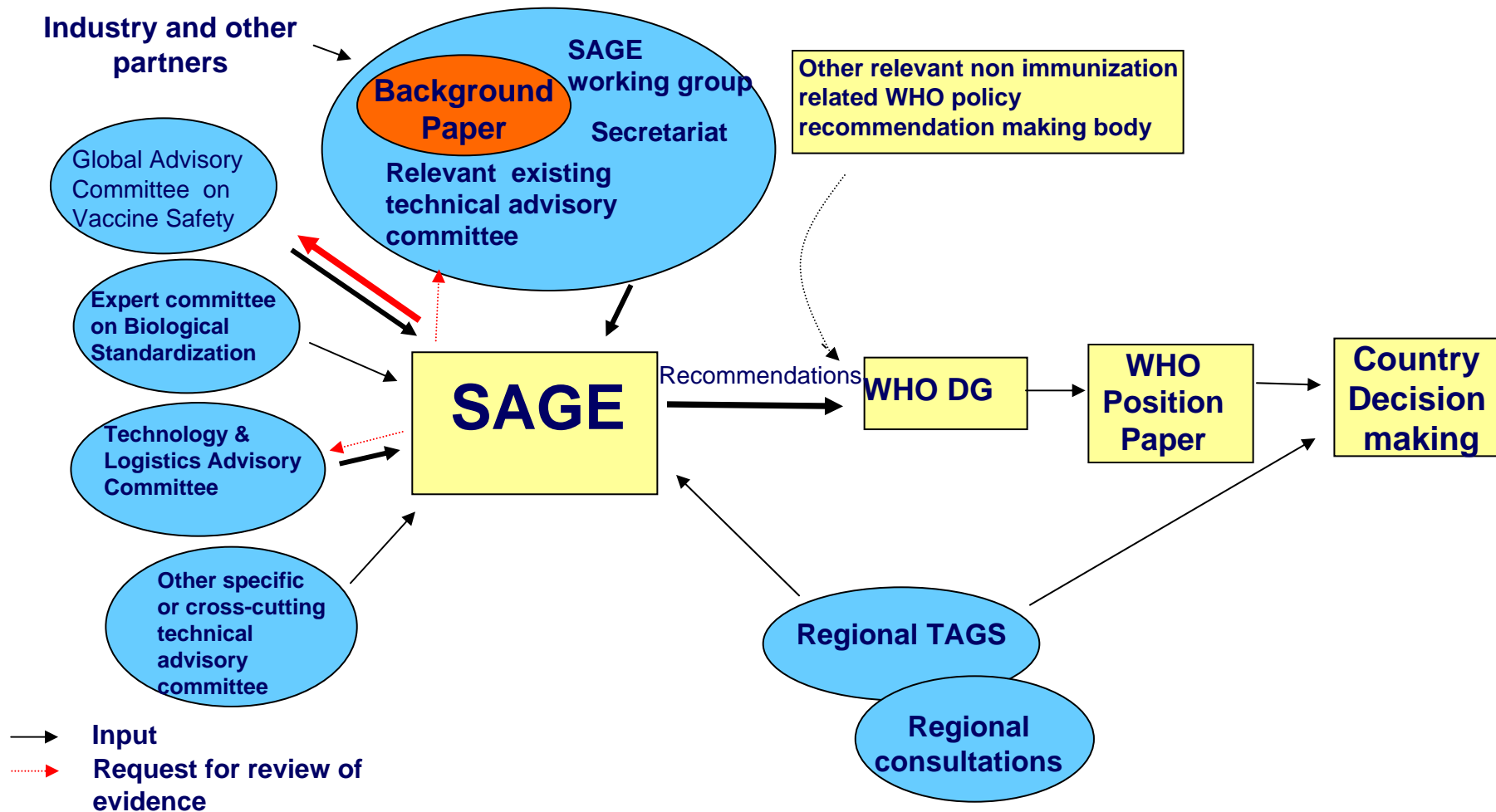
DIPHTHERIA

- [Position paper \(January 2006\) Original English and French versions \[pdf 138kb\]](#)
- [Arabic translation \[pdf 138kb\]](#)
- [Chinese translation \[pdf 210kb\]](#)
- [Russian translation \[pdf 184kb\]](#)
- [Spanish translation \[pdf 50kb\]](#)
- [References \[pdf 56kb\]](#)

[www.who.int/immunization/documents/en](#)



Pathways for WHO Recommendations on Vaccine Use



PP Development and Updating Process

- Developmental and review process
 - Editorial Board staffed by consultant and IVB staff
 - Literature review, background paper, immunological basis of immunization modules
 - Draft circulated to global experts, regions, interested parties, industry, SAGE working group, SAGE members
 - Revised draft to SAGE members and others on as needed basis
 - Key recommendations agreed by SAGE. Plenary discussion before or after draft paper
- Process compliant with WHO "Guidelines for Guidelines" and WHO Guideline Review Committee



Practicalities of Guidelines for Guidelines

- For principle and/or controversial recommendations:
 - Synthesis of all available evidence
 - Evidence summaries using standard template
 - Formal assessment of quality of evidence
 - Consideration of resource use and costs
 - Linked evidence to recommendations, explaining reasons for judgements
- System for assessing evidence for interventions:
GRADE (www.gradeworkinggroup.org)



The Current HepA PP

- Hepatitis A Vaccines, WER, No. 5, 4 February 2000, 38-44.
- Revision tentatively scheduled for late 2010.



General Position on HepA Introduction

- **Results of appropriate epidemiological and cost-benefit studies should be carefully considered before deciding on national policies concerning immunization against hepatitis A.**
- **As part of this decision process, the public health impact of hepatitis A should be weighed against the impact of other vaccine-preventable infections, including diseases caused by hepatitis B, Haemophilus influenzae type b, rubella and yellow fever.**



Position for Highly Endemic Countries

- **In highly endemic countries, almost all persons are asymptotically infected with HAV in childhood, which effectively prevents clinical hepatitis A in adolescents and adults.**
- **In these countries, large-scale vaccination programmes are not recommended.**



Position for Countries of Intermediate Endemicity

- **In countries of intermediate endemicity where a relatively large proportion of the adult population is susceptible to HAV, and where hepatitis A represents a significant public health burden, large-scale childhood vaccination may be considered as a supplement to health education and improved sanitation.**



Position for Regions of Low Endemicity

- **In regions of low endemicity, vaccination against hepatitis A is indicated for individuals with increased risk of contracting the infection, such as travellers to areas of intermediate or high endemicity.**



What Should be Updated?

- Update changing epidemiology and global burden
- Update vaccine products and availability
- Consider stronger recommendation for universal introduction in areas of low and intermediate endemicity
- Update long-term protection data
- Update status of vaccination programs globally
- Update use of HepA in outbreaks



What Should be Added?

- Guidance to countries to detect changing epidemiology
 - Especially for historically high prevalence countries
- Use of HepA for contacts of cases
- Review and "GRADE" evidence:
 - Is hepatitis A vaccine (HepA) effective to prevent disease/death?
 - Are booster doses of HepA needed?
 - Is HepA effective for outbreak control?
 - Is HepA effective for PEP?
 - Is Immune globulin (IG) effective for PEP?
 - Should contacts of hepatitis A cases be given PEP?



Thank you