News Items

An achievement for leprosy?

There are certainly more glamorous areas of science to work in – research disciplines that can bring world renown. So, why would anyone dedicate their entire career to working in the field of leprosy?

On 30 November 2004, Dr Michael Waters, OBE, received the Damien–Dutton Award in recognition for his outstanding achievements in the field of leprosy research. He was nominated by The Leprosy Mission International, for whom he was Medical Consultant for 20 years. It was presented by Dr Wayne Meyers, Chief Mycobacteriologist for the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Washington, D.C.

Many people are shocked to realize that leprosy is still prevalent in many countries around the world – over half a million new cases of leprosy are detected every year. While leprosy is now curable, its consequences can last a lifetime. A person may have to cope with resulting disability or perhaps they must live under the shadow of stigma that surrounds this still very misunderstood disease.

Dr Waters has been a member of the WHO Expert committee who developed the use of multi-drug therapy to treat leprosy, with revolutionary results that are helping see a significant decrease in the number of new cases detected each year. He became Director of the Leprosy Research Unit, Malaysia; served on the Medical Research Council in London; has been the Consultant Leprologist to the Hospital of Tropical Diseases, London and is a member of the Editorial board of the journal *Leprosy Review*, among many other distinguished postings. Dr. Waters’s career has resulted in his outstanding reputation amongst the scientific community, and has also earned him an OBE.

Every year since 1953, the Damien–Dutton Society has presented this Award to an individual or group who have made a significant contribution in the field of leprosy, either by direct patient care, education, social rehabilitation or philanthropy. Previous recipients of the award include: John F. Kennedy (posthumously in 1965), Dr Paul Brand (1977) and Mother Theresa (1984).

This award is a wonderful opportunity, not only to recognize the achievements of an exceptional man, but also to internationally raise the profile of continued efforts to bring about a world without leprosy.

ALERT training calendar

Below are listed ALERT’s training courses from April 2005. For further information on any of the courses, please contact: ALERT Training Division, PO Box 165, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Tel: 251-1-211341/211351; Fax: 251-1-211351/711199; e-mail: leprosytb@telecom.net.et; website address: www.telecom.net.et/tdalert.
Strategy for HIV/AIDS patients management

APRIL 11TH – APRIL 15TH (1 WEEK)

Target group: Health workers managing HIV/AIDS patients. This course intended to support and facilitate proper management and scale up of anti retroviral therapy to people living with HIV/AIDS: The course will deal with indications for Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) monitoring and assessing therapeutic effects with first or second line regimens, treatment with TB and other HIV related conditions etc. Programme managers, administrators with no TB/Leprosy medical background are recommended to take the preceding three weeks course.

Essentials of leprosy and tuberculosis for physicians and scientists

APRIL 18TH – MAY 6TH (3 WEEKS)

This course is for participants new to the field of leprosy and tuberculosis or who need to refresh their knowledge. It aims at physicians responsible for diagnosis, treatment and care of patients with leprosy and tuberculosis in either a hospital or a control programme setting and at scientists who require in-depth knowledge of clinical practice in leprosy and tuberculosis as a basis for their research activities.

Clinical leprosy and tropical dermatology for Physicians

SEPTEMBER 12TH – SEPTEMBER 30TH (3 WEEKS)

Highly recommended for the participants in the following "Management of combined programmes" course who need to refresh their knowledge of clinical leprosy and tropical dermatology. The course can also be taken on its own by physicians responsible for diagnosis, treatment and care of patients with leprosy in either a hospital or a control programme setting. If there are indications ALERT could offer the following courses: Training of Trainers courses Data Management Good Clinical Practice and Ethics course.

Management of combined leprosy and tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS control programmes for physicians and operational research methods in epidemiology

OCTOBER 3RD – OCTOBER 28TH (4 WEEKS)

Target group: experienced physicians responsible for managing a leprosy and TB control programme at the regional level or above. Emphasis on programme management: needs analysis, action plan, implementation of activities, supervision, evaluation, management of PMD. Participants without leprosy experience should also take the preceding Clinical leprosy: course. The last few days of the course will comprehensively cover policy on collaborative TB, HIV/AIDS control programme activities.

Operational research methods in epidemiology

OCTOBER 24TH – OCTOBER 28TH (1 WEEK)

This course is organized jointly with the Dept. of Public Health and Clinical Medicine, Umea University, Sweden. Target group: TBL control programme managers, scientists and other health workers who deal with epidemiological research work and statistics. Basis computer knowledge is a prerequisite. Participants will be introduced to programmes such as Epi-info as a meansto analyze data.
Clinical leprosy and management of combined leprosy, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS control programmes for senior field staff

NOVEMBER 7TH – DECEMBER 16TH (6 WEEKS)

Target group: experienced nurses, paramedical workers or supervisors responsible for leprosy and TB control at the district (or equivalent) level. Emphasis on planning, implementation, supervision and evaluation of control activities, with special attention to PMD, health promotion and support function. The last few days of the course will comprehensively cover policy on collaborative TB, HIV/AIDS control programme activities.