



No time to waste

Michael Cashman on the EU's moral obligation to take the lead in rescuing the millennium development goals

"THE EU WILL NEED TO BE BRAVE. FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION"

MDGs: Too big to fail?

Michèle Striffler, Awa Marie Coll-Seck, Matthias Schmale, Frazer Goodwin

Heart health

Linda McAvan, Dirk Sterckx, Peter Hollins on cardiovascular disease in Europe



Smolensk tragedy

Lidia Geringer de Oedenberg on parliament's commemoration of the Polish plane crash

Plus: UK election, Macedonia EU accession, China-EU relations, colon cancer, carbon capture and storage



in association with



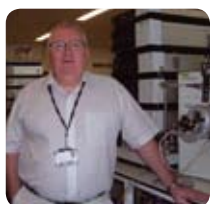
Antimalarial Drug Discovery

CRIMALDDI

Coordination, Rationalisation, Integration

Today, half of the world's population is at risk of catching malaria. In 2008 the WHO estimated that there were about 250 million cases and 860,000 deaths due to malaria. The world has taken up the challenge of malaria, not just to control this killer disease, but to eliminate it as a public health hazard in endemic countries and ultimately eradicate it. This will require a variety of tools and interventions, but new drugs will be a key part of the strategy to meet this ambitious goal, as drug resistance continues to be a major problem for treating the disease. Also new drugs with different profiles to those used to control malaria will be needed to eliminate it.

CRIMALDDI (Coordination, Rationalisation and Integration of Antimalarial Drug Discovery and Development Initiatives) is a two year project funded by the European Commission to address the need for new approaches to new drug discovery.



Professor Steve Ward, Deputy Director of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and Scientific Coordinator of the CRIMALDDI project explained:

“New drugs to prevent, treat and eventually eliminate malaria are desperately needed if we are to make an impact upon the millions needlessly dying from this disease each year. Antimalarial drug research and development programmes are in operation across Europe and throughout the world, but too often these initiatives are uncoordinated and time and money is spent going over old ground.”

There is an urgent need, in light of the renewed global attention to malaria, to bring drug research & development into a coordinated and integrated plan to support the Global Malaria Action Plan. The CRIMALDDI Consortium has been set up to

develop and publicise such an integrated and prioritised roadmap and an associated 5-year action plan for the discovery of new antimalarial drugs. It is planned that this will form the basis of the R&D agenda for antimalarial drugs in Europe.

Dr Timothy N.C. Wells, Chief Scientific Officer for the Medicines for Malaria Venture, said “CRIMALDDI is an important initiative. Its goal of bringing together researchers to optimize the ongoing projects makes sense. We believe that improved communication is key to sharing best practices and speeding the development of new medicines. The European Commission has led this with their AntiMal programme, and this is an important next step.”

Commenting on the project, Professor Ward said: “Co-ordinating research will mean that resources are better directed towards the faster discovery and development of new drugs to treat and eliminate malaria. We will look at the global status of antimalarial drug discovery and use that information to ensure that the research agenda for antimalarials in Europe over the next decade is properly aligned with what's going on elsewhere.”



The CRIMALDDI consortium has identified 5 priority areas which are currently being explored by specialist working groups. In this way the action plan and roadmap will be written with input from as many of the best minds in the malaria community as possible. It is planned to publish the results of these workstreams at a major conference in late 2010 or early 2011.

You can learn more about the Consortium and its work at www.criminalddi.eu. The community will be able to follow the work of the project and the evolution of its recommendations as progress reports and draft proposals are posted. The Consortium is eager to get as wide an input from the malaria community as possible. In the discussion forum, questions have been posed that everyone is invited to comments on which can then be incorporated into the thinking behind the final recommendations.

Alternatively the Consortium can be contacted by email at criminalddi@liv.ac.uk

The Consortium

Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Medicines for Malaria Venture, Special Programme for Research & Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR), World Health Organisation, University of Heidelberg, University of Milan, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale, University of Cape Town, University of Buea