

## **Child Health Priorities in Asia Pacific Region – Developing a Network for Collaborative Research**

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Asia-Pacific region with over 4.5 billion people in 2016, is home to nearly 60 per cent of the world's population. It is a diverse region, with seven of the world's ten most populous countries, and also some of the world's smallest island nations in the Pacific. In the Asia Pacific region except few countries all others struggled to achieve its Millennium Development Goals (1990-2015) despite substantial gains and child health remains to be highly focused and critical area under sustainable development goals with new set of target to **“end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live birth”** under SDG -3 by 2030.

Asia Pacific Pediatric Association (APPA) represents pediatricians from over 21 countries, enabling them to work together to improve the physical, mental and social health and wellbeing of all children, from birth through adolescence. As per APPA Action Plan 2016-18, various health issues of significance were identified. These were identified after extensive discussions with the experts in APPA. The major child health priorities in the region are: reduction in Newborn mortality, reduction in birth defects, increasing equitable coverage of immunization with both routine and newer vaccines, delivering adolescent health, measures to improve environmental health of children, identifying and mitigating early child developmental problems, dealing with the “double burden” of nutritional problems of malnutrition and obesity and research in child health issues.

The Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) are expert groups of APPA working on important child health issues. Total 9 TAGs are established to enable leaders of National Pediatric associations in APPA region who are interested in the specific areas of interest to meet for the purpose of discussing and developing ideas, programs and projects which will improve the care of every child.

APPA have shared detailed Questionnaire with all APPA member societies prepared by respective TAG groups, the responses are received from most of the Technical Advisory Group. Based on the survey analysis results were shared with respective TAG for further actions. APPA have formed task forces on **Antimicrobial Resistance** and **Obesity** and in process of forming a task force on TB.

The translation of evidence into practice is critical. There is a need to develop a network for collaborative research for APPA member societies. APPA is increasingly focussing on ways to encourage knowledge transfer from policy level to ground level. Collaborative research networks have been touted as a solution for enhancing knowledge translation. Many studies recommend that collaborative network act as a catalyst to facilitate more rapid exchange of information and new evidence.

APPA TAGs with the support of collaborative research network have the potential to translate knowledge across the research, policy and practices in APPA member's countries and will be a crucial step for child health in APPA region.