

Project Summary:

More than 2.5 billion people are at risk of vivax malaria globally. Vivax malaria forms dormant liver stages than can cause acute disease weeks to months after initial infection. Treating those liver forms is usually referred to as radical cure. Currently the only widely available treatment for the radical cure of vivax malaria is primaquine.

Effective radical cure for vivax malaria has been hampered by a prolonged treatment regime of 14 days resulting in low adherence and therefore reduced effectiveness.

However novel tools to provide safe and effective radical cure are now available: Recent data from a large multicentre trial suggests that a shorter high dose course of primaquine given over 7 days is effective and safe in G6PD normal patients. Shorter courses are likely to offer improved adherence and therefore better effectiveness.

In addition, there is increasing evidence that an acute falciparum malaria infection can trigger dormant vivax malaria liver stages to cause acute disease and patients who have had falciparum malaria subsequently fall sick with an episode of vivax malaria.

Those findings suggest that it might be beneficial to provide radical cure not only to patients presenting with *P. vivax* but also to patients who present with a *P. falciparum* infection (universal radical cure). Although this new approach is considered promising, preliminary discussions with collaborators from multiple malaria endemic countries revealed that national malaria control programs (NMCPs) are not ready to translate those novel tools into policy and practice without additional evidence.

The aim of this project is therefore to better understand what additional evidence NMCPs require to change policy. This will be achieved through a series of interviews with NMCPs ideally conducted in the first half of 2019 via phone/skype.

Additional face to face interviews may be done during the annual meeting of the Vivax Working Group (VxWG) of the Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (APMEN), which is likely to be in Sep/Oct 2019 in Nepal. The outcome of this work will be a comprehensive framework highlighting required evidence for specific countries to introduce high dose universal radical cure. This project may lead to a first author publication for a suitable student.

Skill base:

Essential:

- Excellent communications skills, experience in qualitative research including development of interview guides and interviews, excellent writing skills and proven ability to communicate with people from different culture backgrounds

Desirable:

- Experience working in the Asia-Pacific region

Suitable for a **Master of Public Health Research Project Student, Honours Student or Master by Research Student.**