



Health Media Monitor
Weekly Coverage of Health issues in Pakistani Media
August 8 – 13, 2009

Public Health Program

Thursday, August 13, 2009

Plan ready to face H1N1 pandemic

In the wake of cases of swine flu H1N1 virus being reported in the countries around Pakistan, the health ministry's national task force on communicable diseases on Wednesday endorsed a national plan of action for the pandemic influenza and reviewed preparedness to meet the crisis. It agreed that special measures would be needed during the approaching Haj season. Several Muslim countries are discouraging their citizens from traveling to the holy land. In contrast, the meeting decided to allow Pakistani Haj pilgrims to proceed to Saudi Arabia.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/national/plan-ready-to-face-h1n1-pandemic-389>

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

Poliovirus active in Sindh as centre delays help

Sindh has not yet received the technical support promised by the federal health minister a month ago to curb the circulation of the poliovirus, said provincial health officials involved in polio eradication activities in the city. In the meantime, the number of poliovirus victims in Sindh so far this year reached seven on Saturday as a four-and-a-half-year-old boy of Kandiaro, Naushehro Feroze, was declared a confirmed polio case by the national health authorities.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/local/karachi-polio-virus-active-in-sindh-as-centre-delays-help-189>
http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=192724

Swine flu risk

The health ministry's confirmation of the country's first swine flu case in Pakistan is cause for concern. The pandemic H1N1 influenza virus has been confirmed in at least 168 countries and has claimed some 800 lives worldwide. The World Health Organisation warns that the number of cases will rise significantly, predicting that two billion people would be infected over the next two years. No such warning has been issued in Pakistan, and indeed WHO does not recommend travel restrictions noting their limited benefit — the virus is already present in most countries. Yet it is essential that the health authorities implement measures to detect possible carriers and prepare for a possible outbreak. Hospitals and health service providers must be put on standby, while the rapid identification of cases and the provision of proper medical treatment must be ensured.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/editorial/swine-flu-risk-289>
http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=192560
<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/International/12-Aug-2009/Swine-flu-spreading-with-Asian-monsoon>

High infant mortality rate linked to lack of breastfeeding

Expressing concern over high infant mortality rate in the country, health authorities have termed breastfeeding a vital step to help bring down such indicators. The speakers were speaking at a seminar on 'Importance of Breastfeeding' at Lady Reading Hospital (LRH) here Tuesday organized by the Pakistan Initiative for Mothers and Newborn (PAIMAN). They were of the opinion that the first month of newborn children was a high-risk time that needed utmost care to deal with and breastfeeding provided every protection during that time of sensitivity.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=192623

Tuesday, August 11, 2009

Hospital waste disposal: ultimatum issued to PIMS

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Director General Asif Shujah has said that the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) has been given the deadline of December 31 to follow proper rules for disposing of hospital waste. He said that for the first time in history, notices have been served to government departments on pollution.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=192538

First swine flu patient recovers, NA told

Federal Health Minister Mir Ijaz Khan Jakhrani said on Monday the country's first swine flu patient had recovered at a hospital. To a question, the minister told National Assembly that 25 suspected patients were examined, of whom only one was hospitalized. He said the anti-viral drug was available at all government hospitals. He said healthcare personnel had been trained to tackle the issue. He said the personnel were screening suspected travelers at airports, seaports and border posts.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\08\11\story_11-8-2009_pg7_36

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/11-Aug-2009/First-swine-flu-case-in-Pakistan>

Polio cases surged to 117 in 2008 from 32 in 2007

The number of polio cases increased from 32 in 2007 to 117 in 2008, Health Minister Aijaz Jakharani informed the National Assembly on Monday. The minister said 25 polio cases had so far been reported in 2009. He said low routine immunization coverage; delicate security situation, especially in FATA and the NWFP, and mass displacement from there; movement across Pak-Afghan border, and social and religious resistance to vaccination were to blame for surge in polio incidence over the years. The minister also said vaccination teams' inaccessibility to troubled areas coupled with threats to their lives also caused polio cases to rise.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\08\11\story_11-8-2009_pg7_37

'Polio vaccination should be compulsory for school admission'

Immunization certificates should be made compulsory for children seeking admission to schools, Health Executive District Officer (EDO) Dr Fayyaz Ranjha said on Monday. He told that a bill regarding mandatory polio immunization certificates for children would be presented before the National Assembly (NA). He said he hoped the NA would pass the bill unanimously, since this would yield positive results. Ranjha said after the discovery of polio cases in Lahore, it became vital that every child be vaccinated against polio. "By making immunization certificates compulsory for admission to schools, we can ensure that the maximum number of children are vaccinated," he said, adding that it was also the parents' duty to vaccinate their children.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\08\11\story_11-8-2009_pg13_10

Monday, August 10, 2009

International mission to monitor TB programme

The International Review Mission will monitor and evaluate TB Control Programme in Pakistan and Dr Ismat Ara Khurshid, will supervise the activity. It was stated in a press release, the tuberculosis' prevalence and incidence in Pakistan is still alarming. Although, Pakistan has been comparatively successful in achieving the targets of 70%, case Detection Rate (CDR) and 85 per cent treatment success rate, we have to catch the global standards as yet.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=7

Sunday, August 9, 2009

Anti-polio drive

The Health Department will launch a three-day Case Response Immunization (CRI) campaign against polio in Lahore from Monday after the Punjab government took serious notice of surfacing of a polio case in the city. Punjab Health director general said that after detection of

polio virus in an 18-month-old child of Mustafabad, it was decided that a special campaign against polio would be launched in Lahore in two consecutive rounds.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=5

Anti-measles drive launched in Peshawar

Authorities launched a five-day anti-measles campaign aimed at children of 21 union councils in the provincial metropolis. Besides the local population, children of the internally displaced persons aged between 9 months and 13 years would be vaccinated during the campaign from August 8 to 12. Executive District Officer (EDO-Health) Dr Abdul Waheed Shah Burki told media that 332 teams had been organised to vaccinate 339,127 children across the district. He said 2,350 anti-snakebite doses and 2,500 anti-rabies vaccines were also available to deal with any emergency.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=7

Saturday, August 8, 2009

Health budget increased to achieve MDGs: minister

Punjab Minister for Population Welfare Neelam Jabbar Chaudhry has said that in order to achieve the results of the Millennium Development Goals, the government has enhanced the health budget and additional resources have been provided to focus on strengthening of the Primary Health Care and Disease Preventive Programmes. Talking to various delegations on Friday, she said huge resources were being spent on provision of health facilities to the masses. Ms Neelam said rural and basic health centers were being upgraded for the provision of modern health facilities to the masses and free medicines to the patients was being provided at the DHQ and THQ hospitals.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=5

Residents at risk of waterborne diseases

The provision of clean drinking water is still a dream in for Rawalpindi residents, as approximately 30 water filtration plants in the city are supplying contaminated water exposing the people to the risk of waterborne diseases. The residents are using water of these plants without knowing that it was unfit for human consumption. While tested water samples in the laboratories were found unfit for human consumption as they indicated presence of bacteria with 67 percent faecal contamination and 1.1 milligram iron per litre.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\08\08\story_8-8-2009_pg11_1

Healthcare delivery system

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

Two cardiac emergency centers inaugurated

Sindh Governor Dr Ishratul Ibad Khan inaugurated two cardiac emergency centers in Shah Faisal and Landhi towns, Karachi. Each of the 50-bed centers will function as units of the Karachi Institute of Heart Diseases (KIHD), and will begin receiving patients in their out patient and emergency departments on Wednesday.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/local/karachi-two-cardiac-emergency-centres-opened-289>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Karachi/12-Aug-2009/Governor-Ebad-opens-cardiac-centres>

Monday, August 10, 2009

Dialysis centre inaugurated

Federal minister for health Aijaz Jakhrani inaugurated a dialysis centre at the Civil Hospital Jacobabad on Sunday. Mr Jakhrani pledged to provide the required machinery, a heavy-duty generator and an ambulance for the centre. Besides, a trained doctor and two medical technicians would be posted to provide better health care to people, he added.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/national/dialysis-centre-opened-for-sixth-time-089>

First surgery centre to be set up in Pakistan

Pakistan Cleft Lip and Palate Association (PCLAPA) with its volunteer efforts has planned to establish first ever Cleft Lip and Palate Reconstruction Surgery Centre in Pakistan to bring back the lost smiles of the children with face disorders. The project was announced during a meeting of officials of the association held here today. Due to lack of awareness about its cure, they spent their whole life with this disability.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=6

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/national/children-with-cleft-lip%2C-palate-smiles-inspire-a-hospital-project-989>

ICT asked to set up new hospital

The Ministry of Health has asked the local administration of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) to set up a new hospital in the federal capital to overcome the burden of patients on federal government hospitals. According to an official of Ministry of Health, the federal government is striving to provide best medical care to the patients at its two hospitals here but there is need to build another hospital in the federal capital. He said with the support of UAE government a trauma centre will be set up in the federal capital near Chak Shahzad, adding, consultants are working to prepare plan in this regard.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=6

Saturday, August 8, 2009

Health camps

National Trust of Population Welfare (NATPOW) is arranging health camps in various districts of the country to provide free of cost medical treatment and necessary information to the patients. NATPOW CEO Iftikhar Durrani told APP on Friday that NATPOW will arrange three health camps in a week at different districts of Sindh including Larkana, Ghotki, Sanghar and Thatha while in the districts of Balochistan including Turbat, Lasbella, Zhob and Khuzdar till August 18.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=6

Professional issues – hazards and negligence

Thursday, August 13, 2009

PMA's concern over promotion delays

The Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) has expressed concern over unnecessary delay in the promotion of postgraduate medical officers. PMA, during an emergent meeting of its office bearers, with Lahore chapter president Prof Dr Yasmin Rashid in the chair, observed that some specific elements' within the provincial bureaucracy were trying to thwart the Punjab government's historical decision to regularize all contract doctors in the province.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=192896

Monday, August 10, 2009

PMA for promotion of senior doctors

The Pakistan Medical Association (PMA), Multan chapter, has demanded regularization of associate professors and professors working on contract basis. PMA Vice President Dr Shahid Rao said more than 60 assistant professors and professors working in various teaching hospitals of the province were on contract. He said these selected associate professors and professors offered their services at prestigious teaching institutes in the relatively underdeveloped areas of the province. He demanded for their promotions at the earliest possibility, to the Punjab government.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/national/pma-for-promotion-of-senior-doctors-089>

Sunday, August 9, 2009

Doctors vow to continue strike

Pakistan Islamic Medical Association (PIMA) Saturday urged the government to fulfil the genuine demands of the PDA or his association and PDA would continue the strike. President of Pakistan Islamic Medical Association Dr Zulfiqar Durrani said that despite the passage of several weeks the provincial government had not taken any step to resolve the doctors' problems due to which the poor patient were facing difficulties in hospitals.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=7

Saturday, August 8, 2009

THQ hospitals, BHUs facing shortage of staff, doctors

Tehsil Headquarters Hospitals and Basic Health Units in Rawalpindi district are facing acute shortage of staff including medical officers. District health department is recruiting 295 employees in BPS 1 to 4 mainly to fill posts lying vacant for the last four years at the offices of Executive District Officer (Health), District Health Officer and Tehsil Headquarters Health offices, however no steps have yet been taken by the government to fill vacant posts of medical officers in THQ hospitals and BHUs.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=6

Consumer information

Tuesday, August 11, 2009

اینٹی وائرل دوائی فلو سے بچوں کو نقصان پہنچ رہا ہے، طبی محققین

لندن (جنگ نیوز) جنرل پریکٹیشنرز نے وزارت صحت سے اپیل کی ہے کہ دوائی وائرل دوائی فلو بچوں کو نہ دی جائے کیونکہ اس سے فائدے کے بجائے نقصان ہوتا ہے۔ طبی محققین نے کہا کہ سوائمن فلو کی موجودہ وبا میں بچوں کو احتیاطی طور پر ٹیسی فلو، نامی دوا استعمال کرائی جاتی ہے لیکن اس کے استعمال سے کچھ بچوں کا جی متلانے لگتا ہے، تے ہوتی ہے اور پانی کی کمی اور دوسری پیچیدگیاں پیدا ہو جاتی ہیں۔ اس دوا کا دوسرے کے علاج، کانوں کی عفونت یا اینٹی بائیوٹکس کی ضرورت کو پورا کرنے سے کوئی تعلق نہیں ہے۔ آکسفورڈ میں جان ریڈ کلف ہسپتال کے ماہر ڈاکٹر اور جنرل پریکٹیشنرز ڈاکٹر کارل ہنچن نے کہا کہ معمولی بیماریوں میں ٹیسی فلو استعمال کرانے کی پالیسی غیر موزوں ہے۔ گذشتہ ایک ہفتے کے دوران کئی تحقیقی جائزوں اور مطالعات میں یہ ثابت ہو چکا ہے کہ اس دوا کے استعمال کے مابعد اثرات بچوں پر انتہائی مضر اور خطرناک ہیں اس لئے زیادہ بہتر یہی ہے کہ خاص طور پر بچوں میں اس دوا کو استعمال کرنے سے گریز کیا جائے۔

<http://www.jang.com.pk/jang/aug2009-daily/11-08-2009/euro.htm>

جسم میں چکنائی کی کمی یا زیادتی مضر صحت ہوتی ہیں، طبی ماہرین

لندن (جنگ نیوز) طبی ماہرین نے کہا ہے کہ جسم میں چکنائی کی زیادتی جہاں نقصان کا باعث بنتی ہے وہاں کمی بھی مضر صحت ثابت ہوتی ہے۔ چکنائی کی زیادتی، بلڈ پریشر، عارضہ قلب، شریانوں کی تنگی، دوسرا دوسرا پے کا باعث بنتی ہے تو کمی سے جلدی امراض، خارش، ہڈیوں کی کمزوری، اعصاب میں خلل اور بول و بزاز میں رکاوٹ کا باعث بنتی ہے۔ امپریل سکول آف لندن کے شعبہ میڈیسن میں ہونے والی اس تحقیق میں بتایا گیا ہے کہ جسم میں چکنائی کی مقدار اور شرح کو مناسب رکھنے کیلئے متوازن خوراک کا استعمال سب سے آسان نسخہ ہے۔ اہلینہ میڈیکل ٹیسٹوں کے ذریعے بھی اس پر قابو پایا جاسکتا ہے ماہرین طب کے مطابق حیواناتی اور نباتاتی روغنیات جسم میں جا کر چکنائی کی کمی اور تیشی پر اثر انداز ہوتے ہیں اس لئے ان کے استعمال میں غفلت اور سستی کا مظاہرہ نہیں کرنا چاہئے۔

<http://www.jang.com.pk/jang/aug2009-daily/11-08-2009/euro.htm>

Saturday, August 8, 2009

Passive smoking may lead to fractures

People who are exposed to second-hand smoke may face the risk of developing fractures, says a new study. Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health studied over 14,000 men and pre- and post-menopausal women in rural China and measured their hipbone mineral density

and recorded non-spine fractures and smoking history, reported the online edition of BBC News. Pre-menopausal non-smoking women who lived with a smoker had more than double the risk of osteoporosis compared to those who lived with a non-smoker.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=5

Long needles may be best for infant immunization

Infants who get vaccinated with a long needle may have fewer reactions than those immunized with shorter needles, finds a new study. Primary care practitioners administer infant immunizations at two, three and four months of age. Despite recommendations for use of a wide-long (23 gauge, 25mm) needle, they commonly use narrow (25 gauge, 16 mm) ones, reported the health portal News Medical. Researchers from Oxford compared three needle sizes varying in length and diameter.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=5

Divorced women may face heart disease risk

Many divorced women who lead stressful lives may face 60 percent more heart disease risk later in life than those who remain in a married relationship, a new study revealed. Researchers in the University of Texas interviewed around 10,000 middle-aged men and women every two years for a decade as part of a wider health and lifestyle survey. The study discovered that over the 10-year period, more than a 10th of respondents - 1,030 people - developed cardiovascular disease.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=5

Genetic disorder could cause strokes

A rare genetic disorder may be responsible for causing strokes in young people, though the condition's progress can be slowed using enzyme replacement treatment, says a study. The disorder known as Fabry disease is characterised by attacks of burning pain in the hands and feet, dark nodular skin lesions and progressive renal insufficiency. It is caused by a missing or faulty enzyme needed by the body to process oils, waxes and fatty acids, reports the online edition of BBC News. These lipids build up to harmful levels in the eyes, kidneys, nervous system, and cardiovascular system. People with the disease can die prematurely because of renal, cardiac or cerebrovascular complications.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=5

Protein helps bacteria escape stomach acid

A tiny protein helps notorious bacteria E.coli evade the ravages of stomach acid, according to a discovery of researchers. Stomach acid helps in digestion of food, killing disease-causing bacteria. One-way acid kills bacteria is by causing their proteins to unfold and stick together in much the same way that heating an egg causes its proteins to form a solid mass. Just as it is virtually impossible to "unboil" an egg, it is also very difficult for bacteria to dissolve these protein clumps, so bacteria and most living things can die when exposed to acid or heat. However, a tiny protein called HdeA protects disease-causing bacteria like the E.coli from the ravages of stomach acid, and James Bardwell and his co-workers at the University of Michigan (UM) have described how this protein works.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=5

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