



Global Campaign News – Issue #62 January 13, 2005

Welcome to the biweekly *Global Campaign News*! The *Global Campaign News* is a forum for international exchange on microbicide activities and information with an aim to build a more informed and integrated movement for microbicide development and other prevention options against HIV and STDs. This and previous issues of GC News are available online at <http://www.global-campaign.org/gcnews.htm>

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Report back from ICASA

Africa



The 14th International Conference on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa (ICASA 2005) took place from 4-9 December 2005 in Abuja, Nigeria. The conference, though hectic at times, was a terrific opportunity for microbicides advocates to network, build their skills, and get new information.

Microbicides activities were featured in many parts of the conference, including roundtables, plenaries (both for the entire conference and the community forum), skills building workshops, several oral presentations, radio interviews, an article in the conference newspaper and a microbicides Community Corner booth. The Global Campaign wishes to commend the many African Microbicide Advocacy Group (AMAG) and Nigerian HIV Vaccine and Microbicide Advocacy Group (NHVMAG) members who worked hard before and during the conference to create ways for advocates to meet up, learn from each other, synergize and energize. For more information about the conference, visit <http://www.icasa2005.org.ng/english/>.

U.S. National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day – 7 February

North America

The U.S. National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD) is a community mobilization effort that leads to capacity building in order to increase awareness, participation and support for HIV prevention, care and treatment among African Americans. February 7, 2006 marks the sixth year of this annual event.

Currently, NBHAAD is directed, planned and organized by a body known as the Strategic Leadership Council in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The purpose is to mobilize communities and address specific issues in regard to local epidemics and best practices that are both science based and will influence the course of HIV in Black communities across the country. Specifically, the primary goals of NBHAAD are to motivate African Americans to *get tested* and know their HIV status, *get educated* about the transmission modes of HIV/AIDS, *get involved* in their local community and *get treated* if they are currently living with HIV or are newly diagnosed. Find out more about this important effort at www.blackaidsday.org.

Next month, in conjunction with several partners, the Global Campaign will be releasing a new fact sheet focused on microbicides and the African American Community. In addition, we will be hosting an event at the National Press Club targeted at journalists interested in learning more about the HIV epidemic in the African American population

and how new prevention technologies could have an impact. This “Newsmakers Event” will take place on 8 February in Washington, D.C. If you are interested in learning more, please contact bpatel@global-campaign.org.

Valentine’s Day Action: Send Your U.S. Senators & Reps an MDA Valentine!

North America



What better way to celebrate Valentine’s Day this year than to send your U.S. Senators and Congressional Representatives a friendly reminder to support the Microbicides Development Act (MDA)? This is a fun and easy way to lobby your legislators for increased support of microbicide research and development and let them know that this is an issue that’s important to their constituents. Use the MDA Valentine’s Card Campaign to engage people during conferences, events, tabling and meetings over the next month – or host a Valentine’s card

making party! You can download the cards and instructions from the Global Campaign’s website at <http://www.global-campaign.org/download.htm#advocacy>.

To reward all of your hard work, the Global Campaign will be awarding a prize for whichever group or individual sends in the most cards! To enter the contest and give us your feedback, write to us at info@global-campaign.org. Be sure to let us know how many cards you sent, to which Reps and Senators and send us a photo of you with your cards so we can highlight you in the next *GC News*!

Global Campaign outreach in 2005

Global

With the help of many dedicated partners and advocates, the Global Campaign presented at 31 national and international conferences, symposia and meetings across 11 countries in 2005. We also displayed *Giving Women Power Over AIDS*, our traveling exhibit, in 9 cities in North America and Europe – including Washington, DC., Atlanta, Los Angeles, Seattle, London, Montréal, New Haven, Hartford and New York. The active involvement of grassroots advocates, NGOs and other civil society partners enabled us to both broaden our reach and to maximize cost effectiveness last year by training and assisting local advocates to make presentations at key conferences and other important venues where it would have been costly to send staff.

Of the 39 presentations/exhibits mentioned above, almost half (44%) were conducted by advocates, either presenting on their own using Global Campaign materials or co-presenting with secretariat staff. We reached audiences all the way from women’s health activists in Rwanda to European and Canadian Parliamentarians, from harm reduction educators in Latin America to sex worker advocates in Cambodia, from members of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association in North America to international development experts and policy makers in Thailand (and a lot of people in between).

Letter to the editor: Comments on “What happened to the Savvy trial in Ghana?”

Africa

Editor’s Note: Many thanks to Rosalie Dominik from Family Health International (FHI) for submitting the following corrections. These suggestions have been inserted into the archived version of the GC News #61, originally published on 21 December 2005 and available at: <http://www.global-campaign.org/GCArchives.htm>. As always, we welcome comments on any articles that are published in the Global Campaign News.

Dear Lori,

I read the information about the Savvy trial that is posted on the Campaign’s website. I’m afraid that a few things aren’t accurate and should probably be revised:

A) The incidence in the study was lower than expected, but we cannot say that there was a “decline” in HIV incidence among the group of women enrolled because we do not know what the HIV incidence truly was among this cohort before enrollment.

B) The power of the study is the chance of finding a statistically significant result if Savvy truly provides some assumed level of protection. Suggested revision:

The incidence of HIV infection among women eligible for participation in a microbicide trial is an important factor in determining how many women will need to enroll in order for a trial of a truly effective gel to show that the gel does indeed reduce HIV infection better than a placebo. The chance that a trial will show that a truly effective gel does reduce HIV infection better than placebo is known as the power of the study to show a statistically significant result.

C) The statement that “Based on the information contributed by the women who participated in the trial, Savvy appears to be safe for a broad range of women to use” is too strong. Just as the (terminated) study had very low power to detect a protective effect, it had very low power to detect a harmful effect. It is preferable to state that where was no evidence of any safety concerns.

I hope this is helpful.

Rosalie

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Starpharma news release about Vivagel Global

Many GC News readers may have seen recent press coverage about Starpharma receiving Fast Track status from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for their product VivaGel. We received a number of queries about the news release, and will be gathering more information about this development, and including it in GC News, in future issues. The full news release is available at <http://www.starpharma.com/PDFs/060109%20-%20VivaGel%20Fast%20Track%20Status.pdf>

We welcome your input and contributions for future issues! Please send emails to: info@global-campaign.org. If you would like to unsubscribe to the Global Campaign News, please reply to this e-mail with the subject line: UNSUBSCRIBE.