The Union North America Region in 2014:
Bringing The Union closer to you

FROM EVIDENCE TO PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION
For nearly 100 years, The Union has drawn from the best scientific evidence and the expertise, experience and global reach of our staff, consultants and members to advance solutions to the most pressing public health challenges affecting people living in poverty around the world.


VIRTUAL PROGRAMME BRINGS RESEARCH TRAINING TO HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AROUND THE WORLD

The Union’s on-site operational research training has enabled hundreds of health professionals to develop useful research skills, but for many in limited-resource areas, leaving their posts for a training course is impossible. TREAT TB’s virtual learning platform for operational research has shown how this gap can be bridged.

As with The Union’s face-to-face training initiatives, TREAT TB’s virtual training guides health professionals through the process of developing a protocol and conducting an operational research study, generating evidence that can help solve local challenges.

Participants in this year’s programme included health professionals from Brazil, India, Kenya and Swaziland. They investigated important issues in global tuberculosis control, such as screening techniques, contract tracing, MDR-TB patient outcomes and TB-HIV co-infection. They also received one-on-one mentoring from Union experts on study design, sampling methods, data analysis and manuscript writing.

Operational research can contribute to important changes in public health policy and practice. TREAT TB’s online platform provides an innovative solution to the difficulties that distance and busy schedules can pose in providing this knowledge and training to health professionals across the globe.

KNOW
- The TREAT TB initiative, funded by USAID and managed by The Union North America Office, expanded its STREAM clinical trial of a shortened MDR-TB regimen to Mongolia this year. As of September 2014, 332 patients are enrolled in this trial in Mongolia as well as other sites in Ethiopia, South Africa and Viet Nam.
- Findings of TREAT TB’s PROVE-IT study, evaluating the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of new TB diagnostic tools, were published in PLoS One and other peer-reviewed journals (July 31, 2014).

SHARE
- The International Management Development Programme (IMDP), based at The Union North America Office, established partnerships with the Global Health Workforce Alliance and US National TB Controllers Association in 2014.
- The IMDP participants’ improved skills in project management, leadership, strategic planning, budgeting, supply-chain management, human resource development and communications contributed to strengthening Ministries of Health in 23 countries, as well as 102 non-governmental organisations across 42 countries.
- More than 270 delegates attended the 18th Conference of The Union North America Region in Boston, Massachusetts. The conference theme was ‘Stopping TB from laboratory to clinic’.

ACT
- Dr Paula I Fujiwara, Scientific Director of The Union, wrote an op-ed for the Washington Post pointing out that lack of funding for TB services in the US is the real threat to public health, not immigrant children who some elected officials were claiming to be a health risk. This opinion was widely picked up and cited in both print and electronic media.
- Staff from The Union North America Office took to the streets to participate in a World TB Day March designed to raise awareness of the fact that TB is everywhere.

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