



EMBLEM Newsletter

A monthly means to inform and inspire our TEAM

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Steering Committee Meeting Launches Active Phase of EMBLEM Study

Lacor Hospital in Gulu, northern Uganda, is the hub of many critical activities in its region. In November it became the hub of one more, as it played host to the first Steering Committee Meeting for the EMBLEM Research Study. The 17 participants present at the Lacor meeting included study PI's and staff from Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania, Dr. Sam Mbulaiteye, the overall PI from USA, and others representing critical support entities for the study, such as INCTR, AFENET, and University of Stellenbosch in South Africa.

EMBLEM is an NCI funded case control study of 1500 Burkitt lymphoma (BL) cases and 3000 age, sex and residence frequency matched controls being conducted at hospitals in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. This study, designed to learn more about the epidemiology of Burkitt's Lymphoma in East Africa, is now underway with registering its first patients at the Lacor Hospital.



EMBLEM Steering Committee members & Stakeholders meeting (Nov 18th, 2010)

The phase of obtaining ethical clearance for the study, necessary to be undergone separately in each of the three countries, caused delay from the original timeline proposed for EMBLEM. However, all of the study countries have now obtained such clearance and are starting the pre-implementation and implementation phases of the study.

The formal sessions of the SC started with a welcome by Dr. Martin Ogwang, the Uganda PI for EMBLEM and host of the meeting. Following was a Scientific Review of the Study by Dr. Sam Mbulaiteye, with updates on status of ethical clearances and field studies at the study sites.

The roles of Steering Committee were then discussed, which included:

- Provide scientific oversight
- Review and recommend resources needed to achieve scientific objectives of the study
- Advise on statements of work and adequacy of subcontracts
- Review and approve annual site-specific reports to IIB and DCEG (case accrual by age, sex, and residence).
- Monitor financial flows and advise on changes to protect the study feasibility when considering adjustments.

Approve reports to NCI on milestones achieved per year.

Also in the formal sessions were reports from EMBLEM PI's of each country, and informative talks regarding the supportive roles of AFENET, INCTR, and University of Stellenbosch.

Committee members from Kenya and Tanzania then met with Ugandan colleagues to observe and learn from them regarding setting up offices with communications capacity, preparing timelines, hiring and training of staff, and preparing budgets. A tour of the Lacor Hospital included the wards, laboratory, EMBLEM office and the rest of the facilities in the hospital. Lessons learned, and information sharing from the Lacor staff, will greatly facilitate the others to follow suit in their respective locations.



SC members discuss laboratory set up at Lacor Hospital description, role, and responsibility regarding the study.

The overall PI met separately with the EMBLEM teams of Kenya and Tanzania to review their local issues. Both teams were ready to commit to a timeline that would have pre-implementation phase of four months and would then aim to start registering cases by April 2011.

Among key recommendations coming out of the meeting is that EMBLEM teams should have regular local feedback meetings to streamline chain of command, and to build collegiality and ownership of the project. Each member should know at any time his/her job

Staff Personal Notes

On the 17th of December, 2010; Mr. Simon Ojok, driver for the Lacor Hospital EMBLEM staff, was blessed with a bouncing baby girl who was named Elizabeth Laker



Editor's Note

We can all take heart that the study is underway, as Lacor have registered their first patients for the EMBLEM study. They noted that if they had been able to start at the beginning of 2010, they would already have 41 patients registered, as that is the number of BL patients they have seen from the study area this year. Let this inspire us all to get through the pre-implementation phase quickly so that we lose as few patients as possible in 2011. Together Everyone Achieves More (TEAM).

EMBLEM Newsletter is a monthly on-line publication based on contributions of the EMBLEM Study staff.

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