Introduction to PAHO

20th to 27th April, 2024
22nd Vaccination Week in the Americas
13th World Immunization Week
Outline

• History of PAHO
• History of Vaccination Week in the Americas
• Achievements in disease elimination
• Collaboration with Rotary International
• Our future: Elimination Initiative 2030
History of PAHO

• In 1870, a yellow fever epidemic struck Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina and, within eight years, had spread to the United States through maritime transport.

• The need to control the spread of epidemics from one country to another to protect people’s health and countries’ economies led to the creation on 2 December 1902 of what is today known as the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

https://www.paho.org/en/who-we-are/history-paho
History of PAHO

- The PAHO is committed to providing technical support and leadership to Member States as they pursue their goal of Health for All.

- Specifically:
  a. To urge each Republic to promptly and regularly transmit to the Bureau all data relative to the sanitary conditions of their respective ports and territories.
  b. To obtain all possible aid for a thorough, careful, and scientific study and investigation of any outbreaks of pestilential disease which may occur in any of the said Republics.
  c. To lend its best aid and experience toward the widest possible protection of the public health of each of the republics in order that disease may be eliminated and that commerce between the said Republics may be facilitated.
  d. To encourage and aid or enforce in all proper ways the sanitation of seaports, including sanitary improvements of harbors, sewage, drainage of the soil, paving, elimination of infection from buildings, and destruction of mosquitoes and other vermin.

https://www.paho.org/en/who-we-are/history-paho
PAHO's regional immunization program

• Since the creation of the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) in 1977, countries of the Americas have moved from using six vaccines in their national vaccination schedules to an average of 16 vaccines.

• The EPI is constantly updating itself so that all people can receive all recommended doses of vaccines throughout their lives to obtain maximum benefits from vaccine-preventable diseases.

https://www.paho.org/en/topics/immunization
Vaccination Week in the Americas

- VWA is a yearly event where **more than 40 countries and territories in the Americas come together** to offer live-saving vaccines to millions of persons of all ages.
- The VWA started in **2002**, when the Ministers of Health of Colombia and Venezuela joined forces to end a measles outbreak.
- As the years passed, more and more countries joined the effort to organize coordinated vaccination operations to **reach vulnerable populations, put an end to outbreaks and prevent future ones**, in the spirit of pan-Americanism.
For over 40 years, the success of the EPI has allowed the Region of the Americas to eradicate smallpox and eliminate 6 vaccine-preventable diseases: polio, rubella, congenital rubella syndrome, measles, and neonatal tetanus.
Achievements in disease elimination

Since 1979, the Regional Revolving Funds have ensured access and availability to all health commodities needed for the elimination of communicable diseases.

https://www.paho.org/en/revolving-fund
Collaboration with Rotary International – Operations

**Brazil**
Rotary clubs mobilized to help stave off a potential polio outbreak after dangerously low vaccination rates were reported by health officials. More than 11 million Brazilian children were inoculated during a massive two-month vaccination campaign, reversing a trend of plummeting immunization coverage.

**Guyana**
Members of the Rotary Club of Demerara are using their 30 years of experience in fighting disease to deliver COVID-19 vaccines and aid to Indigenous communities.

**Canada**
Rotary and Rotaract members in Kingston, Ontario volunteered at the region’s largest COVID-19 vaccination center, helping to facilitate the process of immunizing hundreds of people per day.

Collaboration with Rotary International - Advocacy

Fundraising for polio eradication

**Big:** In November 2007, Rotary International entered in a unique partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to inject a further US$ 555 million into the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

**Small:** The Rotary initiative World’s Greatest Meal (where Rotarians host meals and ask for donations) has raised over $7 million for polio eradication operations.

Technical documents

Vaccine hesitancy is often fuel for heated public debate, but conversations about vaccines don’t have to be contentious. In fact, being willing to have them is one of the most impactful ways we can influence global health. These tips may help you open up a dialogue and get your loved ones thinking differently about being vaccinated.

https://polioeradication.org/who-we-are/partners/
Our future: PAHO’s Elimination Initiative

Integrated Sustainable Framework for the Elimination of Communicable Diseases in the Americas

https://www.paho.org/en/elimination-initiative
VWA 2024
Vaccination Week in the Americas

Engage now to protect your future

#GetVax

THANK YOU