



XXVI Meeting of PAHO's Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Cuahtemoc Ruiz Matus, Margherita Ghiselli, Jennifer Sanwogou, Octavia Silva, PAHO-Washington, DC

Location	Virtual
Dates	14-16 July 2021
Participants	PAHO's Assistant Director Jarbas Barbosa, TAG Members, SAGE Chair Dr. Alejandro Cravioto, 250+ participants from 52 countries and territories in the Americas, including EPI managers, managers of epidemiological surveillance of vaccine-preventable diseases, heads of laboratory, presidents of National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAG), PAHO immunization staff and representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO), the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Gavi, UNICEF, Rotary International, Sabin Vaccine Institute, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, among other immunization partners and experts.
Purpose	To review the regional progress on selected topics and issue recommendations to address the current and future challenges faced by national immunization programs in the Region of the Americas.

PAHO convened its regional meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on Vaccine-Preventable Diseases on 14-16 July 2021.

Given the global COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held virtually via Zoom. TAG Chair, Dr. Peter Figueroa, opened the meeting by welcoming all participants and recognizing the hard work done by health care workers during the pandemic to maintain immunization, surveillance, and all aspects of immunization programs.



TAG Members, Cuahtémoc Ruiz Matus, and Andrés de Francisco at the XXVI Meeting of PAHO's TAG on Vaccine-Preventable Diseases, July 2021. Credit: Fernando Revilla, PAHO/WHO

PAHO's Assistant Director, Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, joined in opening the meeting by acknowledging Dr. Figueroa and other participating TAG Members, and welcoming participating representatives of national immunization programs, NITAG presidents, SAGE chair Dr. Cravioto, and all partners and agency representatives participating in the meeting. Informative sessions and discussions followed, covering the following topics:

- Update of the Regional Immunization Program
- Digital Health in Immunization
- Regional Update on the Elimination of Measles and Rubella
- COVID-19 Vaccination
- Vaccination of High-Risk Groups in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Vaccine Hesitancy among Adults in the Caribbean



- Communication and Demand for COVID-19 Vaccines
- Regional ESAVI Surveillance System for COVID-19 Vaccines
- Statement of the TAG on COVID-19 Vaccines and Vaccination
- Recommendations for the Final Phase of Polio Eradication
- Managing Advantages and Risks when Integrating Other Temperature-Sensitive Health Products into the Vaccine Cold Chain

Under the leadership of Dr. Figueroa, TAG Members set out to review the topics and emit recommendations for each.

The 2021 TAG Meeting Final Report covering all topics and recommendations will be available at <https://www.paho.org/en/technical-advisory-group-vaccine-preventable-diseases>