

SLMA Guidelines and Information on Vaccines

Sixth Edition 2017

Sri Lanka Medical Association

H T Wickramasinghe

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SLMA Guidelines and Information on Vaccines 6th Edition was just launched recently. The first edition of this book was published almost sixteen years ago in 2001 co-edited by Dr. Lucian Jayasuriya and Prof Anura Weerasinghe mainly focusing non-EPI vaccines. A need was felt immediately after its release as many end-users felt that EPI vaccines also caused concern requiring accurate clarifications. The second edition of this book titled “SLMA Guidelines on Vaccines” was released in 2004 filling the gap to cover both EPI and non-EPI vaccines. It is interesting to note that Dr. Lucian Jayasuriya had been an editor from the first edition to this latest sixth edition. His service as an editor for the last 16 years has to be truly appreciated.

SLMA has chosen an editorial board and a core review group comprising of professional and academic experts in the field of vaccines. In this new edition, each chapter is well written with concise and precise content. The book consists of 32 chapters including two new chapters. One new chapter on “Immunization of transplant recipients” which is very up to date and appropriate to Sri Lanka as the country is now reaching new heights in the field of organ transplant. The author has quite exquisitely covered all aspects of vaccination including the vaccination of family members, contacts and care givers.

The second new chapter is also perfectly timed as the dengue vaccine has now become the limelight in global vaccine forums and all medical professionals in dengue endemic countries like Sri Lanka should be aware of the status of dengue vaccine in the global platform. This chapter on dengue vaccine addressed the present status with chimeric yellow fever-tetravalent dengue vaccine (CYD-TDV) in a very unbiased way discussing all the pros and cons. It would have been more appealing

if the author had atleast touched upon the other dengue vaccines in the pipeline and made a brief evaluation on their present progress.

Chapter on measles vaccine has been deleted in this edition, quite aptly as chapter on MMR vaccine has adequately addressed the information on measles vaccine.

5th Chapter on diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis were definitely challenging topics. The authors have done a meritorious job detailing each vaccine available both in the government and the private sectors which is no easy task. Waning immunity and efficacy of the whooping cough vaccine has been shown in recent epidemiological studies from many countries with emergence of severe whooping cough in adults and adolescent. The new recommendation of CDC is to give Tdap (reduced antigen tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis) at 7-10 years and another booster at 11-18 years. In addition CDC further recommend Tdap for pregnant mothers to protect newborn babies from fatal pertussis. This new development of extra booster doses of whooping cough vaccine needed to be included to evoke a potential debate for future vaccine forums.

In addition to vaccines, this book also contains other auxiliary disciplines in immunology such as passive immunization, management of anaphylaxis, adverse events following immunization. These topics are at times more important to medical professionals than vaccines. The chapter on “management of anaphylaxis” is well written covering all the details of its management.

Many countries in the world today routinely vaccinate pregnant mothers with Tdap and influenza vaccines. Tdap is given to prevent fatal pertussis in the newborn and influenza vaccine to prevent mother getting fatal influenza during pregnancy. It is important to remind

Senior Consultant Paediatrician

Former Head, Department of Paediatrics, Sri Jayawardenepura General Hospital Kotte

Correspondence: HTW, e-mail: <cwatti@gmail.com>. Accepted 17 January 2018.



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the significant number of maternal deaths we had during 2015 influenza epidemic in Sri Lanka. Vaccines in pregnancy is a current hot topic gaining momentum among vaccinologists. Hence a separate chapter on vaccines in pregnancy to provide information on the vaccines before conception, during pregnancy and after delivery, would have been ideal. I hope the editorial board will fill this gap in the next edition.

The purpose of this book is to give adequate, precise

and up-to date information to physicians and other medical professionals in the field of vaccines. In that context, this book has done more than what one would expect.

No doubt that the SLMA is very proud to have given the necessary guidance and support to this elite work, yet the untiring work of the members of the expert committee on communicable diseases, contributors, editors and the members of the core review groups should get all the credit for this excellent book.