

2020



WORLD RABIES DAY

LEARNING FROM COVID-19, IMPLEMENTING ONE HEALTH APPROACH TO ELIMINATE RABIES WVA/WMA JOINT PRESS RELEASE

About 4,6 billion people (60% of the world's population) are at risk of getting rabies and approximately 97% of documented human cases are attributable to dog bites. The ultimate goal is to control and eliminate dog-mediated rabies, which is one of the few communicable diseases that can be eliminated using currently available vaccines and tools for veterinary and public health interventions. With a more comprehensive and integrated approach, it is expected that dog rabies will be eliminated in target areas, and there will be an eventual decline and disappearance of human rabies cases. Current efforts aim to strengthen coordination and technical and institutional capacities. Focus areas include human rabies prevention through pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis, mass community dog vaccination, surveillance and epidemiology, enhancing laboratory diagnostic capability, increasing public awareness and risk communication, educating communities and professionals, enacting supportive legislation, improving dog population management, and establishing and protecting rabies-free zones/areas. Existing mechanisms for implementation, when applied, emphasize One Health collaborations.

World Veterinary Association President, Dr Patricia Turner said; given our ongoing lessons in confronting SARS-CoV-2 transmission threats at the animal-human-environment interface, we must realize that we live in an era where zoonotic disease threats and risks may only be effectively mitigated through comprehensive measures driven by multisectoral and multidisciplinary alliances. To eliminate dog transmitted human rabies by 2030, the veterinary profession must join forces with all the relevant professions and communities to control and eliminate dog-mediated rabies in the spirit of One Health.

World Medical Association President, Dr Miguel Jorge said; the COVID-19 pandemic has painfully reminded us that we are not safe from infectious diseases, just the opposite. We must step up our efforts to prevent infections in the first place. Rabies is an important target for prevention. Protecting animals and humans by immunisation is a cost-effective and safe measure against a very deadly disease. A chance that should not be missed.

Global Alliance for Rabies Control Executive Director, Prof Louis Nel said; the 2020 World Rabies Day theme emphasised collaboration and vaccination as dog rabies control requires a collaborative, One Health, approach with the human and animal health sectors working together to eliminate the disease. We applaud the WVA and WMA collaborative One Health approach to end deaths from rabies.



RABIES ENDS HERE

WVA, WMA, and GARC invite you to [join](#) the #RabiesEndsHere campaign

<http://worldvet.org/> <https://www.wma.net/> <https://rabiesalliance.org/>