

News

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The countries of Latin America will meet in Guatemala to analyze the rabies control agenda in the region

(REDIPRA 12 — Meeting of the Directors of the National Programs for Rabies Control of Latin America)
Antigua Guatemala - 30 November to 02 December 2008

Rio de Janeiro, 22 November 2008 — 22 representatives of the countries of the Americas, will meet in Guatemala from 30 November to 02 December 2008, in the 12th Meeting of Directors of National Programs for Rabies Control of Latin America (REDIPRA 12), organized by PAHO/WHO and the Ministries of Health and Agriculture of Guatemala. Observers from research institutions, universities and other international technical cooperation agencies including the IDB, the OIE, OTCA, FAO, IICA and OIRSA will participate.

The 12th REDIPRA will analyze the actions necessary for completing the elimination of human rabies transmitted by dogs, intersectoral surveillance and prevention of rabies transmitted by wildlife and strengthening of the cooperation networks for zoonoses control.

According to Dr. Albino Belotto, Coordinator of the Veterinary Public Health Project, and Director of PANAFTOSA - PAHO/WHO, this REDIPRA has a special meaning, since it has been completed 25 years of the Regional Program for the Elimination of Rabies transmitted by dogs launched in 1983, Dr. Belotto emphasized the progress registered since its inception, "when there was an average of 350 deaths a year from rabies transmitted by dogs in the Americas" and today it has reached a 90% reduction in the incidence of human and canine rabies.

Although the problem has been already solved in the majority of the countries of Latin America, in 2007 there were recorded 16 cases of human rabies transmitted by dogs, according to Belotto *"these cases could have been avoided with simple prevention measures and minimum cost, vaccinating dogs and treating the people attacked by dogs suspicious of rabies with sera and vaccines recommended by PAHO. We hope, that during this REDIPRA are identified the corrective actions that each country must carry out to achieve that, no later than 2012, no more cases of human rabies transmitted by dogs occur in the countries of America"*.

PAHO is the Regional Office for America of the World Health Organization.

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