Translating Science into Policy to Fulfill the Promise of Rotavirus Vaccines

George Armah, University of Ghana
Tony Nelson, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Kathleen Neuzil, PATH
Mathuram Santosham, Johns Hopkins University
Andy Seale, PATH
Conference Highlights I

• Rotavirus is an important cause of global morbidity and mortality
  – Surveillance and modeling confirm that rotavirus causes a substantial proportion of severe, dehydrating diarrhea in diverse settings and populations

• Rotavirus vaccines significantly reduce severe gastroenteritis, death, and other important outcomes, under “real world” conditions of use
  – Impact data presented from an unprecedented number of countries
  – The number of severe RV cases prevented is consistently greater in low resource populations as compared to high resource populations, despite modest relative effects

• Rotavirus vaccines are safe
Conference Highlights II

• WHO has **removed age restrictions** on RV use, potentially allowing more children to receive benefits of vaccines.
  – Models informing the best use of these vaccines in different settings

• The rotavirus vaccine pipeline has **promising new candidates** in various stages of development

• **Important research continues** into rotavirus pathogenesis, immunity, improving the performance of vaccines, and correlates of protection
National RV Introductions by Geographic Region: 38 Countries*

*National introductions by geographic region, as of 1 Sept 2012
GAVI Supported RV Introductions by Geographic Region: 9 Countries*

**Americas**
- Bolivia (2008)
- Guyana (2010)
- Haiti
- Honduras (2009)
- Nicaragua (2006)

**Europe**
- Armenia
- Georgia
- Moldova (2012)

**Africa**
- Angola
- Burundi
- Cameroon
- Congo, Rep.
- Djibouti
- Ethiopia
- Ghana (2012)
- Guinea-Bissau
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Niger
- Rwanda (2012)
- Sierra Leone
- Sudan (2011)
- Togo
- Tanzania
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

**Middle East**
- Yemen (2012)

*National introductions by geographic region as of 1 Sept 2012*
Scientists as Advocates

No one knows this issue better, you are the experts

The most compelling messengers are passionate, invested in an issue and see the big picture

Your job is to be credible and to draw on science - that’s what decision makers need
Ghana’s Simultaneous Introduction of Rotavirus and Pneumococcal Vaccines

Photo: GAVI/Doune Porter/PATH/2012
Four Take-Home Messages

1. Know what you are striving for

2. Know your context

3. Every threat, every meeting, every interaction is an opportunity to move your agenda forward

4. You will be more effective if you work with others
Start With What You Know…

• Advocacy: the **act of strategically supporting a cause, idea or policy** and convincing the right people of its importance and of the need to take action

• Both an **art and a science** - applied to changing or defending practices and polices, for securing resources, and for overcoming barriers and challenges towards goals

• **Draws on** social science, political theory, human psychology, organizational and international development studies, public health
Context is everything
Advocacy – Moving an agenda forward

So what’s our agenda?

Fulfilling the promise of rotavirus vaccines
Confront problem, threat or opportunity
Gather and analyze information about the issue and the context
Articulate desired outcome
Plan
Act
Evaluate
Moving an agenda forward
The art of moving an agenda forward...

The ‘Science’ of Advocacy

The ‘Advocacy’ of Science
Resources Are Available to Help

PATH Rotavirus Advocacy and Communications Toolkit
http://sites.path.org/rotavirus
vaccine/

ROTA Council Advocacy Toolkit
http://rotacouncil.org/toolkit
Four Take-Home Messages

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ROTA Council

Established in 2011 with members representing every region
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>George Armah</th>
<th>Julie Bines</th>
<th>Shams El Arifeen</th>
<th>Carlo Giaquinto</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roger Glass</td>
<td>Zulkifli Ismail</td>
<td>Gagandeep Kang</td>
<td>Alexandre Linhares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erkin Musabaev</td>
<td>Tony Nelson</td>
<td>Kathy Neuzil</td>
<td>Umesh Parashar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vesta Richardson</td>
<td>Duncan Steele</td>
<td>Oyewale Tomori</td>
<td>Anita Zaidi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Lend Your Voice

We can ensure rotavirus vaccines reach all of the children who need them, together we are too loud to be ignored

Please visit ROTACouncil.org/toolkit for rotavirus vaccine advocacy resources
Introduction of Hib Vaccine in GAVI-eligible Countries

- **1997**: 1 country
- **2005**: 18 countries
- **2011**: 65 countries
We can ensure rotavirus vaccines reach all of the children who need them, together we are too loud to be ignored
Where am I?
You must be a researcher
Because what you told me is absolutely correct but completely useless
Yes, how did you know?

You’re 30 metres above the ground in a balloon
Yes. How did you know?
You must be a policy maker
Because you don’t know where you are or where you’re going, and now you’re blaming me…. 