Symposium:

Access to Affordable Medicines and R&D in Latin America

Co-sponsored by the

International Health Systems Program, Harvard Chan School of Public Health

Organizers:
Veronica Vargas 2017-18 Luksic Visiting Scholar
Ned Strong, Former Executive Director, DRCLAS

Monday, April 23, 2018
9:00 am to 6:30 pm
Center for Government and International Studies (CGIS) S-030
1730 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, MA

Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries are undergoing an aging of their populations, accompanied by an increased burden of chronic conditions, and a growing demand for more complex and costly drugs. Most LAC countries fall into a middle-income category and are host to most of the poorest populations in the Americas. Policies that promote universal coverage of health services (UHC) are now under discussion and medicines are part of the debate. At the same time, LAC countries are increasingly consuming imported medicines, which implies that pharmaceutical trading has been growing steadily. China and India are new partners in this trend. On the other hand, despite long-term investment in basic science and an increasing presence in the scientific peer-review literature, pharmaceutical research and development (R&D) is still nascent in Latin America.

This event will explore access to affordable medicines, availability of different types of drugs, especially generics, and the transformative policies needed to make progress on pharmaceutical research and development (R&D) in the LAC region.
9:00–9:10 am OPENING REMARKS

Brian D. Farrell  Director, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies; Professor of Biology, Department of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology.

9:10-10:30 am PANEL I

Access to Affordable Drugs on the Path to Universal Health Coverage
For a decade the LAC region has been increasing its pharmaceutical expenditure faster than GDP growth. However, most of the spending on medicines occurs outside the public realm, where the cost is borne mainly by patients, imposing an excessive burden on the poor. Public policies supporting rational use of medicines — including national essential medicine lists, treatment protocols, generic prescribing and technology assessment — are all being tested, unevenly, to improve access. On the other hand, there is pressure from the industry and patients to access the latest generation of more expensive drugs. Is the promotion of generic drugs a sound policy? What about access to the newest drugs to treat cancer, for example?

Chair: Dennis Ross-Degnan  Associate Professor at the Department of Population Medicine at Harvard Medical School; Director of Research at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Institute

Presenters:
“Overview of Access to Affordable Medicines in Latin America”
Veronica Vargas  Luksic Visiting Scholar 2017-18

Dr. Adriano Massuda  Research Fellow, Harvard Chan School of Public Health

“Approaches to Improving Access to Innovative Medicines”
Dr. Anita Wagner  Associate Professor of Population Medicine; Co-Director, Center for Cancer Policy, Harvard Medical School

10:30–11:00 am COFFEE BREAK
11:00 am – 12:30 pm PANEL II

Remapping Trade Exchange in Generics Medicines

LAC countries, especially in the public sector, are net importers of medicines, which implies that pharmaceutical trading has been growing steadily. There is a pharmaceutical industry in LAC led by Brazil, Argentina and Mexico. However, important partners in the growing trend are India and China. India is an industrial powerhouse for the production of generics and China is a worldwide supplier of active pharmaceutical ingredients (API). This panel will provide an overview of the genricS industry and growing trade with India. How sustainable are current trade trends? Are ongoing discussions on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement (TRIPS) in Asia disrupting the dimensions of this trade relationship, and how should LAC countries strengthen regulatory relations in India and China?

Chair: Gabriela Soto Laveaga  Professor of History of Science, Department of the History of Science, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University

“The Generic Pharmaceutical Industry in LAC and Mexico”
Veronika Wirtz  Assistant Professor, Boston University

“The Increasing Role of Asia in the Global Generic Pharmaceutical Industry”
Ramesh Govindaraj  Lead Health Specialist, The World Bank

“Assuring the Quality of Internationally-Traded Generics: Models from Global Governance”
William Savedoff  Senior Fellow, Center for Global Development

“Strengthening the Regulatory Capabilities in LAC”
Dr Analía Porrás  Unit Chief, Medicines and Health Technologies, Pan American Health Organization (Advisor, Technological for Health)

12:30–2:00 pm LUNCH

2:00–4:30 pm PANEL III

Current Development and Challenges of Pharmaceutical and Vaccines R&D in Latin America

Despite long-term investment in basic science and an increasing presence in the scientific peer-review literature, pharmaceutical R&D is still nascent in Latin America. One important reason is the absence of an administrative policy framework (IP lawyers, venture capital, rules of engagement) that facilitates the transformation of these resources into new discoveries. This session will explore emerging experiences as well as challenges and future developments, and how Harvard’s presence in Latin America may contribute to R&D development.
Chair: Charles Berde  Chief, Professor of Anaesthesia (Pediatrics), Harvard Medical School

“The Development of a Vaccine against the Respiratory Syncytial Virus”

Alexis Kalergis  Professor at the Department of Molecular Genetics and Microbiology, Director, Millennium Institute, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

“The Experience of Benznidazole, to be Used in the Treatment of Chagas in Children”

Silvia Gold/Ignacio Demarco  President, Foundation Mundo Sano, Argentina

“Zika Vaccine R&D in Brazil”

Carlos Gadelha  Industrial Complex and Innovation Research Group, Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, Brazil

“The Clinical Trials of an Anti-Lung Cancer Vaccine in the US

Sergio Pastrana  Cuban Academy of Science, Cuba

“Facilitating Partnership and Technology Transfer for R&D Initiatives”

Curtis T. Keith  Chief Scientific Officer, Blavatnik Biomedical Accelerator, Harvard Office of Technology Development

“Practical Strategies for Increasing Access to Medicines and Promoting Innovation”

Quentin Palfrey  Global Access in Action, Berkman Klein Center, Harvard University

4:30–5:00 pm COFFEE BREAK

5:00–5:45 pm CLOSING SESSION

Roundtable on Future Challenges and Opportunities

Chair: Peter Berman  Professor of the Practice of Global Health Systems and Economics, Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard Chan School of Public Health

Panelists

Yuly Fuentes  Board Member Chile Massachusetts Alliance Team, Chile

Arturo Sweigerner  ISADE University, Argentina

Tatiana Andia Rey  Universidad de Los Andes, Colombia

Ken Shadlen  The London School of Economics and Political Science, United Kingdom

5:45–6:30 pm CLOSING RECEPTION

Free and open to the public. Pre-registration not required.