

## **ASTMH conference summary**

From October 28<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup> 2018, I attended the 67th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) in New Orleans, the United States of America. The



ASTMH Annual Meeting is a five-day conference that has more than 5000 attendees. The ASTMH is an international meeting for researchers in tropical infectious diseases. The majority of research that is being presented, focuses on malaria, however many other topics are covered e.g. schistosomiasis, zika, dengue and Ebola. Attendees are working in various settings and this congress is a unique opportunity to bring them together and let them share their newest insights during the many parallel sessions, plenary sessions and poster presentations that are organized.

The conference started with a session on outbreaks during which 5 medical doctors working in the public health sector shared their experiences in an interactive session with the audience. Other sessions focused on a specific outbreak e.g. ebola, zika and dengue. For ebola and dengue, the promising results on vaccine development, testing and implementation were shown.

A substantial part of the conference focused on vaccine development for malaria. 5 presentations showed various methods for discovering and implementation of targets for transmission blocking vaccines. Another session showed data on several Controlled Human Malaria Infection and malaria drugs discovery, which are both very necessary as malaria incidence increased in 2016 due to resistance to current antimalarial medication.

The Charles Franklin Craig Lecture (a lecture given by a distinguished worker in the field of tropical medicine) was given by dr. Beth Kirkpatrick. She showed an overview on Controlled Human Infection Models, pointing out very clearly the ethical considerations that should be made before performing such studies.

Many other researchers showed their excellent work during the conference. Several controlled infection models were shown e.g. for cholera and dengue. A documentary on snakebites showed the extent of the problem and health care workers stressed the importance of awareness towards this problem that results in 125.000 deaths a year.

Taken all together, the conference had a high education level and was inspiring for my own research.

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