

Foreword from Editor-in-Chief George F. Gao — China's Outreach to the World: Public Health Goes Global

China CDC Weekly is a national public health bulletin published by the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC). It will serve as the primary communications channel of China CDC for disseminating timely, reliable, authoritative, accurate, objective and useful public health information as well as recommendations to health professionals and the public. *China CDC Weekly* is indexed and archived as a scientific journal, and its contents can therefore be searched and referenced.

China CDC Weekly also includes analyses of surveillance and survey data on communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, and risk behaviors. It prioritizes important information for the practice of preventive medicine and public health, and each document undergoes thorough scientific vetting and is cleared for publication by China CDC as consistent with its plans and policies. In addition, as a professional scientific journal, it will also publish manuscripts (both basic and applicable science) of disease control and public health from all over the world.

China has about one fifth of the world's population, and ensuring the health of Chinese population is critical to the security of global health. As global economies rapidly expand, new geographical linkages appear through new trade partnerships, and infectious disease outbreaks and epidemics emerge and transmit without warning, unified platforms are urgently required to share our experiences, failures, and successes as a global community. *China CDC Weekly* will contribute significantly to this great need.

In the last few decades, China has made tremendous strides in improving public health. From 1949 to 2018, the life expectancy for Chinese residents has increased from 35 years to 77 years, the maternal mortality rate has decreased from 1,500/100,000 to 18.3/100,000, and infant mortality has decreased from 200/1,000 to 6.1/1,000. China's success in these three internationally-accepted indicators has resulted from intensive research, meticulous planning, and strategic implementation, and these efforts continue to receive strong support from the government through commitments such as Healthy China 2030 (1). *China CDC Weekly's* mission, therefore, is to share China's experiences, history, and perspectives to provide invaluable information for the improvement of global health.

China has much to share with the world based on great achievements from decades of effort in public health and disease control. For instance, All-People's Patriotic Health Campaign is a well-organized and well-coordinated program implemented in China with five major lessons: first, government political will was key for "no-profit" public health programs; second, societal involvement and active participation with proper knowledge was prioritized as professionals alone could not solve every public health issue; third, good stakeholder coordination reinforced every efforts; fourth, the National Immunization Program (NIP) provided a strong foundation for public health work; fifth, expanding the program's influence to underdeveloped areas helped innovate new techniques for increasing accessibility and reach.

China CDC Weekly will follow a path initially set forth by the United States Centers for Disease Control's (US CDC) *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR) (2). Over its history, MMWR has provided some of the most significant contributions to public and global health and is one of the primary resources for researchers, practitioners, policymakers, the public, and mass media worldwide.

On June 5, 1981, MMWR published the first report to describe what would later become known as acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) (3). During the first eight years, almost 50 recommendations and guidelines were published in MMWR (3). Reflecting on these publications, we can see the trajectory of the AIDS epidemic and the evolving complexity of the resulting countermeasures. Most notably, the weekly format of MMWR allows for new information to quickly be released, absorbed and revised as progress moved forward. US CDC is able to garner media attention, draw forth political willpower, and alert the national community of health workers and researchers largely through the reach of MMWR. Today, MMWR continues to play a vital role in communicating new findings and developments in the fight against global epidemics (3), as evidenced in the report of the last Ebola disease cluster in Sierra Leone in 2016 (4).

Just as MMWR acts as a major lever for US CDC's influence on public and global health, we hope *China CDC Weekly* will help cement China CDC's influence in the global community. Following this legacy, we report in the

first issue on the recent plague event in China in 2019, calling for awareness for a devastating but almost-forgotten infectious disease. Nothing can be neglected in regards to public health.

As the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) continues to develop, over 65 countries containing 70% of the world's population and 30% of the world's GDP will be connected. Meanwhile, China CDC will have more opportunities to share, cooperate, and learn from our global counterparts (5). In September, 2018, heads of State and dignitaries from 53 African countries congregated in Beijing for the seventh triennial Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). While some major initiatives promoted trade, industry, and cultural exchange, public health emerged as the top priority for the cooperative plans (6). China has become a pivotal partner for global health as the China CDC collaborates with Africa CDC to build a unified, well-trained public health entity that is equipped to promote the health of Africa and to ensure global health security. On November 1, 2018, in collaboration with other leading influenza specialists and all five WHO Collaborating Centers for Influenza, we initiated the first World Flu Day, supported by the WHO and Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO Director-General (7). Launching the World Flu Day in China provided an important opportunity to strengthen global collaborations in the research and control of influenza and other diseases (8).

Outbreaks, epidemics, and chronic diseases have repeatedly shown to permeate every layer of human society and transcend national borders without discretion (9). Furthermore, occupational, nutritional, environmental, radiation safety, and many other types of public health issues represent enormous challenges for the world. Thus, public health should be our top priority for our increasingly integrated global community.

The establishment of *China CDC Weekly* represents a major step forward for global health. China CDC has dedicated substantial resources towards this public health bulletin, and with the advice and expertise of many international partners, *China CDC Weekly* will act as a model for other developing countries to disseminate their public health experiences, findings, and progress.

Improving health for the welfare of the global population requires action, requires coordination, and requires communication. Therefore, it is my sincere pleasure to introduce the establishment of *China CDC Weekly*.



George F. Gao, DPhil
Editor-in-Chief, *China CDC Weekly*
Director-General, Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention

References

1. World Health Organization. WHO | Healthy China 2030 (from vision to action). Health Promotion 2016. <http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/9gchp/healthy-china/en/>.
2. Shaw FE, Goodman RA, Lindegren M, Lou W, Ward JW, Centers for Disease Control. A history of MMWR. *MMWR Surveill Summ* / CDC. 2011;60 Suppl 4:7 – 14. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/su6004a3.htm>.
3. Curran JW, Jaffe HW. AIDS: the Early Years and CDC's Response. *MMWR Suppl*. 2011;60(4):64 – 69. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/su6004a11.htm>.
4. Alprent C, Sloan M, Boegler KA, et al. Interagency Investigation Team. Notes from the field: Ebola virus disease cluster - Northern Sierra Leone, January 2016. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2016;65:681 – 2. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6526a4>.
5. Chen L, Yang M. New opportunities for China in global health. *Lancet Glob. Health* 2018;6:e722 – 3. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(18\)30263-8](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(18)30263-8).
6. Gao GF, Nkengasong JN. Public health priorities for China–Africa cooperation. *Lancet Public Health* 2019;4:e177 – 8. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(19\)30037-4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(19)30037-4).
7. Anonymous. World Flu Day: momentum from China for influenza control. Vol. 392, *The Lancet*. Lancet Publishing Group; 2018. p. 1600. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)32770-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)32770-3).
8. Liu WJ, Bi Y, Wang D, Gao GF. On the Centenary of the Spanish Flu: Being Prepared for the Next Pandemic. *Virology* 2018;33:463 – 466. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12250-018-0079-1>.
9. Gao GF. For a better world: Biosafety strategies to protect global health. *Biosafe Health* 2019;1:1 – 3. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.bshealth.2019.03.001>.