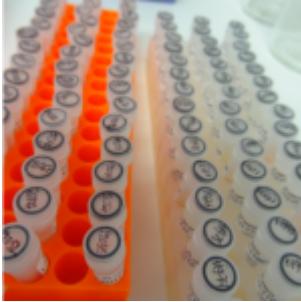


# Hepatitis B and C virus in Lao blood donors

**Project leader:** Antony Black

**Member of staff:** Phonethipsavanh Nouanthong



## **Background:**

Hepatitis B virus (HBV) is highly endemic in the Lao People's Democratic Republic with up to 10% of blood donors being positive for HBsAg. Luxembourg Institute of Health, Luxembourg and the Lao Red Cross have also previously found a high prevalence of occult infection in Lao blood donors. Such potentially infectious blood is currently not screened for in the Lao blood donations. The current study aims to expand these findings in a nation-wide survey.

## **Activities**

The HBV serology profile was determined among approximately 5000 first-time and repeated donors during 2014-2015 in six representative provinces.

## **Preliminary results**

Prevalence of HBsAg was high in first time Lao blood donors. Repeat donors also had high prevalence, suggesting that they have not been effectively screened out of the donation process. Repeat donations from HBsAg positive donors need to be reduced, in order to save cost and resources.

## **Prospective**

The data were presented and discussed with the Lao Red Cross. The implementation of an effective database tracking system during blood donor recruitment could be a cost-effective way to exclude repeat donors that were previously tested positive.

## **Partners**

+ Lao Red Cross, National Blood Transfusion Centre, Vientiane, Lao PDR.

+ Department of Pathology, University of Health Sciences, Vientiane, Lao PDR.

+ Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, Chiang Mai University, Thailand.