

## O5.16

### **Urinary Schistosomiasis in Iran: has elimination been achieved?**

Gholamreza Mowlavi, Jafar Masoud  
*Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran*

According to WHO more than 600 million people are at risk of schistosomiasis worldwide. Most of these groups are at risk of urinary schistosomiasis causing by *Schistosoma haematobium* which is prevalent in 53 countries in Africa and in the Middle East including Khuzestan province southwestern Iran. In epidemic periods, 400 villages in the area have been observed infected, with the highest rate of 8.3 % (40,000-50,000 infected individuals) in 1970. Aiming to interruption of infection transmission, the national program was implemented using a combination of control measures such as case finding, mass treatment, snail control and environmental sanitation. The number of egg passers reduced gradually from 1600 in 100,000 urine samples before the year 1976, to 2 cases in 1998 out of the same sample size. The last confirmed case was seen in 2001. In current condition possible declaration of elimination of bilharziasis in Iran has been regarded by health authorities in the country. New surveillance plan which is concentrated on Integrated Health System is being revised based on the present situation. On the verge of elimination of the disease in the country, along with implementation of modern diagnostic techniques, threatening factors such as the possibility of imported infection from the neighboring country, Iraq, and continual monitoring of snail habitats should be taken into account.