

Minutes of ESCGD Executive Committee Meeting, Brussels, 6th September, 2005.

Present: Ian Poxton (chairman), Michel Delmée (treasurer), Ed Kuijper (secretary), Paola Mastrantonio, Anne Collignon, Frederic Barbut. Guest: Maja Rupnik. Absent with confirmation: Jon Brazier

1. Minutes of last meeting (Brussels, May 3rd, 2005 Brussels)

*ECCMID 2005 congress in Copenhagen. The educational session did not fulfil the expectations. This was due to miscommunication with the ECCMID committee and problems with the installation of the interactive PowerPoint presentations at the very last minute. All members agreed however, that the organisation of the workshop can also be improved. The secretary has sent a letter to Peter Schoch who replied that the problems have also been encountered by other study groups and that appropriate measures have been taken to prevent this in the near future.

* the website has been updated and the minutes have been added.

2. Announcements by the chairman. The chairman mentions that ESCMID has offered assistance for keeping a financial account by the study groups. Michel Delmée, who coordinated the financial transactions of our study group, welcomes this initiative and all members agree to accept the invitation by ESCMID.

3. Second *Clostridium difficile* congress (Maja Rupnik). Maja is a co-applicant of an EU Marie Curie project, together with Nigel Minton (UK, Nottingham). The application has received good reviews and the final decision is expected by the end of September. Six conferences will be organized on separate topics of *Clostridium*. One of the topics is *Clostridium difficile* and this meeting will be combined with the second congress in Slovenia. The advantage is that young scientist will be stimulated to participate, since they will be sponsored by a Marie Curie grant. It remains possible to receive financial support from industry to decrease the costs further. Ed Kuijper mentioned that a 3 year period of silence between the two meetings is perhaps too long. The final date of the congress is likely to be in May or July 2007, in Slovenia. As soon as decision of the grant application is known, correspondence by e-mail will begin to organize the meeting. Another important date is September 2007, Edinburgh, for an meeting on anaerobic bacteria - jointly organised by the Society for Anaerobic Microbiology and the Society for General Microbiology.

3. Study project "European prospective study of *Clostridium difficile* strains: phenotypic and genotypic characterization of the isolates from different clinical status (Frederic Barbut). Frederic has received 450 strains from 12 European countries. Priorities for the first characterisation of the isolates have been discussed and it was decided that ribotyping (Jon Brazier, Ed Kuijper), toxinotyping (J. Petit and Frederic Barbut), status of the binary toxin (Petit) and phenotypic analysis of TcdA and TcdB (Michel Delmée) should be finished before the next meeting in Nice. The amount of money available for these studies is very limited to € 9400. Ian will contact ESCMID for an additional financial grant, Michel will contact Oxoid and Techlab and Ed will investigate the possibilities to combine this work with the tolevamer trial. When additional support has been found, antimicrobial susceptibility tests can also be considered.

5. ESCMID in Nice, 2006. The committee decided to organize a symposium with two speakers: Cliff McDonald (CDC, Atlanta) and Ed Kuijper (LUMC, Leiden) on the epidemiology and microbiology of the *C. difficile* new 027 variant. During the study group meeting, an interim report will be presented by Frederic Barbut on the results of the European study. Additionally, Ian and Anne Collignon will briefly summarize the knowledge on vaccination and immune response to *C. difficile*. At the end of the meeting, time will be made

available for remarks and suggestions of the audience to improve further the quality of the study group.

6. FP6 grant application (Ed Kuijper). Due to the recent epidemics of *C. difficile* 027 variant, *Clostridium difficile*-associated diarrhoea has been recognized as the most important nosocomial infection, exceeding infections due to MRSA. Grant applications for CDAD have to compete with MRSA, but the committee feels that this is the most appropriate time to look for funding. The last call for FP6 is now open, but its deadline is November 8th. The situation for FP7 is less clear and it remains possible that the next opportunity for grant application is at the earliest in 2007. Therefore, the committee discussed the pros and cons of an application (integrated project) in the next few months. The working packages to include are based on epidemiology and prevention, new treatment modalities in RCT form, vaccination, pathogenesis, animal model, population dynamics, and virulence markers. All committee members will evaluate these topics and will correspond with Maja, Ian and Ed. Contacts will also be made with scientists in the field of *C. difficile* and with ESCGD members by e-mail. If an FP6 application is not possible, a separate application can be considered focussed on the new 027 variant with a network of participating laboratories.

7. Next meeting. The date of the next meeting is to be fixed in December 2005 in Leiden (suggested dates are: 1, 2, 16 Dec).

September 7th, 2005