Newsletter No 2 – June 2012

Dear Colleagues,

Here is another newsletter from the ESGVH reporting on several important issues that happened during the past year. First, there is an update on the recent ECCMID 2012 conference in London. There is also an update on the research initiatives from the study group in the summary of the business meeting and an overview of the different conferences and symposia that are organized by ESGVH. We hope you will find this of interest. For further information about our study group, including recent news, annual reports and executive committee members can also be found on the ESCMID web site www.escmid.org/esgvh

**ECCMID 2012 in London**

From March 31st to April 3rd, the 22nd European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases was held in London. This year there were a number of excellent sessions on viral hepatitis ranging from hepatitis C viral genomics to an overview on the treatment of chronic HCV with the new direct acting antiviral agents (DAA) telaprevir and boceprevir. Not only the efficacy of the later agents were discussed, also Prof. G. Foster highlighted recent concerns regarding viral resistance of HCV to these and newer compounds. Other hepatitis viruses were also discussed. For example in the early morning workshop, Dr. P. Harrison discussed several important issues regarding delta virus (HDV). He stressed the importance of testing all hepatitis B infected patients for HDV. There were a few oral presentations on viral hepatitis B. For example. Dr. R. de Man highlighted some important studies in hematological or transplant patients treated with immunomodulatory agents. He stressed the importance of HBV testing before initiation of immunomodulatory agents and to start pre-emptive therapy with an anti-HBV agent in order to prevent HBV flare with subsequent risk of liver
failure and need of postponing the immunomodulatory agent. A symposium was also organized by Diasorin on HBs antigen quantification, as a tool for diagnosis and therapeutic follow-up of HBV disease. Finally, the new kid on the hepatitis block, hepatitis E, was discussed in an excellent lecture by Dr. Dalton and Prof. Izopet. They mentioned the high prevalence of autochthonous (genotype 3) hepatitis E in both healthy and immunocompromized patients in Europe. For members, all presentations of the conference can be found on the ECCMID website.

In all, at this ECCMID conference in London there were many very interesting sessions on viral hepatitis with excellent speakers and many attendees. This is encouraging for coming ECCMID conferences.

**ESGVH business meeting 2012**

*Corporate membership of ESGVH*

Similar to other special interest groups within ESCMID, the ESGVH executive has also decided to open their doors to corporate membership. We believe that progress in the diagnosis and management of viral hepatitis requires collaborative effort and input from both physicians and industry. In the past 2 years several pharmaceutical companies have joined our group. If ESGVH members know of companies that would be interested in joining us, please let a member of the Executive committee know so that we can send out our standard letter of invitation to them.

*Post graduate courses*

Courses at ECCMID 2012 were well visited and successful. A new proposal for a post-graduate course has been written (see later).

*Research projects*

A project on collecting data on and investigating HIV/ HBV coinfected patients treated with tenofovir (TDF) in whom the viral load never reaches detectability was proposed. It was decided to establish a scientific board and write a grant application to ESCMID.

Another project was proposed on the registry of chronic HEV cases when no such international surveillance currently exists. ESGVH members who would like to be involved can write an email to one of the board members (see later).
ECCMID 2013

Proposed sessions are: 1. early workshop use of direct acting antiviral agents in HIV/HCV coinfected patients; 2. two official symposia on the “Use of new drugs for hepatitis C: pharmacogenetic and virological implications” (together with pk/pd group) and on “Viral hepatitis in immunocompromised host”; 3. A Key note lecture entitled “Towards a treatment without peginterferon”.

Renewal of the executive committee of ESGVH

According to the new rules the ESVGH has to appoint an executive committee (EC). Membership of the study group is open to all interested persons even if you are not a member of ESCMID. However, to become a member of the EC you should be member of ESCMID. You cannot be a member of the EC if you are a member of an executive committee of another international society. Whoever is interested to become a member of the EC can contact the current EC members.

ESGVH future activities

Post-graduate educational course

The ESGVH proposed to ESCMID to organise a second post-graduate educational course. Prof. M. Puoti and Dr. V. Ghisetti are the organisers of the course and they have written a very interesting scientific program. The course will be held in 2013 in Milan, Italy.

International meeting on “Management of Acute C hepatitis”

ESGVH is planning to organize an international meeting on the management of acute C hepatitis which will take place in the Netherlands in 2013. Prof. Hoepelman and Dr. J.E. Arends are organizing this meeting. This conference aims to write recommendations for the diagnosis and management of people with acute viral C hepatitis in Europe. Whoever is interested helping with the organization of this event can contact us.
E-mailing list

With the help of ECCMID, the ESGVH is keeping an e-mailing list of all members of ESCMID who are interested in viral hepatitis. If you do not wish to be on our emailing list, please indicate this by sending us an email. **If you are interested to become more involved in our study group, please let us know by contacting one of the board members.**

Thank you for your interest in ESGVH. We hope to see you in Berlin next year (April 2013). Do not hesitate to join us at the ESGVH business meeting that will be held during the next ECCMID to exchange ideas, propose new activities and meet the ESGVH executive committee.

Best regards,

**ESGVH Executive Committee**

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