1. New Executive Committee

During the annual ESGVM business meeting at the ECCMID 2017 in Vienna a new Executive Committee was appointed. Here is the new ESGVM Executive Committee:

- Luca GUARDABASSI, Denmark - Chairperson
- Els BROENS, Netherlands - Secretary
- Maria Constança POMBA, Portugal - Treasurer
- Carmen ESPINOSA-GONGORA, Denmark – Liaison with ESGAP
- Lisbeth Rem JESSEN, Denmark - Guidelines
- Dorina TIMOFTE, United Kingdom - Postgraduate education

The new EC wants to thank Dr Antonio BATTISTI, previous treasurer, and Dr Cindy DIERIKX, previous secretary, for their excellent work over the last years.

2. Articles and conference presentations

The following publications and conference presentations have been produced by ESGVM members on behalf of the Study Group:

- GUARDABASSI L. Why do we need antimicrobial stewardship in veterinary medicine? 27th European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ECCMID), 22-25 April 2017, Vienna, Austria.
ESGVM newsletter December 2017

- Interview of L GUARDABASSI. How pets can help in the fight against antimicrobial resistance. 2017 Newsletter of Health for Animals. https://www.healthforanimals.org/resources-and-events/resources/newsletter-repository/6-responsible-antibiotic-use.html

3. Educational activities

ESGVM postgraduate course
After the great success and excellent evaluations from attendees of the first joint ESGVM/ESGAP Postgraduate Course on Antimicrobial Stewardship in Veterinary Medicine in Gothenburg in 2015, the two Study Groups are organizing a second course entitled ‘Challenges in Veterinary Hospital Infection Control and Antimicrobial Stewardship’. The course will be held on 4th of April 2018 as a satellite meeting of the annual British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) congress (5 - 8 April) in Birmingham, United Kingdom. More information: https://escmid.pulselinks.com/event/15765

4. Research projects

Identification, taxonomy and ecology of the Staphylococcus intermedius group (SIG)
This project was granted in November 2016 to Dr Arshnee MOODLEY (University of Copenhagen, Denmark) through the ESCMID SG Research Funding. The objectives are 1) to evaluate and improve the performance of the databases of the two MALDI-TOF MS instruments available in the market for species identification of Staphylococcus intermedius Group (SIG) isolates, and 2) to assess phylogeny and host adaptation of the three species belonging to this group by whole genome sequencing. At this stage, whole genome sequencing has been performed on a total of 151 SIG strains, including 113 S. pseudintermedius, 12 S. intermedius, 16 S. delphini A and 9 S. delphini B. The strain collection include isolates from humans, companion animals, pigeons, minks, badgers, ferrets, opossums, polar bears and zebra from 6 continents. MALDI-TOF and pan genome data are currently analyzed and the final results are expected in the spring of 2018.

PREPARE-VET (PREscriber Perspectives on Antibiotic use and Resistance Education in Europe – VETERinary medicine).
This ESGVM project in collaboration with the ESCMID Study Group for Antibiotic Policies (ESGAP) aims at evaluating the quality of education on antimicrobial stewardship in final year veterinary students using a questionnaire. The project is coordinated by Dr Carmen ESPINOSA-GONGORA and involves 101 veterinary schools in 31 European countries. The questionnaire has been translated to nine languages and it is currently being circulated among last-year veterinary students. Five hundred answers from 15 countries have already been collected and we expect many more in the first half of 2018 when the students finalise their clinical rotations. The survey will be closed and the final results will be analysed in June 2018.

5. Guidelines

ESGVM guideline core group
An ESGVM guideline core group chaired by Dr LR JESSEN was established at the ECCMID 2017 in Vienna. The core group consists of the following experts: A BOUSQUET-MELOU (France) E BROENS (Netherlands), A FERRAN (France), L GUARDABASSI (Denmark), L PELLIGAN (UK), PL TOUTAIN (France), J TURNIDGE (Australia) and A VELA (Spain). The scope of the core group is to promote prudent antimicrobial use among veterinary practitioners in Europe and to improve patient management and outcome taking into account the ecological impact of treatment. The following tasks were defined:

- Priorities topics for clinical practice guidelines.
- Set up expert panels for the prioritized topics
- Define a standard procedure for developing guidelines or consensus papers.
- Establish contacts with relevant partners to ensure effective implementation of the guidelines at the European and national levels.

During ECCMID 2017 the core group decided to prioritize three topics: 1. bovine respiratory disease (BRD), 2. gastrointestinal (GI) disease in companion
animals and 3. gastrointestinal (GI) disease in pigs. For the first two topics, multidisciplinary expert panels have been established and the first meetings are planned in January 2018; the expert panel on GI disease in pigs will be established in 2019.

Guidelines on diagnosis and management of BRD
This expert panel is chaired by L GUARDABASSI and consists of the following experts: M APLEY (US), A BOUSQUET-MELOU (France), E BROENS (Netherlands), S BUCZINSKI (Canada), BC CREDILLE (US), B LUBBERS (US), A O’CONNOR (US), M STOKSTAD (Norway), E TIMSIT (Canada), PL TOUTAIN (France), J TURNIDGE (Australia) and A WOOLUMS (US).

Guidelines on diagnosis and management of GI disease in companion animals
This expert panel is chaired by LR JESSEN and consists of the following experts: K ALLENSPACH (US), CR BJØRNVAD (Denmark), D BOOTHE (US), E BROENS (Netherlands), A FERRAN (France), L GUARDABASSI (Denmark), A MATEUS (UK), K SIMPSON (US), J TURNIDGE (Australia), S UNTERER (Germany), S WEESE (Canada) and U WINDAHL (Sweden).

Other guidelines
L GUARDABASSI, LR JESSEN and L PELLIGAND are also involved in a joined ESGVM/ISCAID guideline working group on prevention of surgical site infection in companion animals, which is chaired by the International Society for Companion Animal Infectious Diseases (ISCAID).

If you are interested to contribute to future guidelines or you have ideas on how to support this key activity of ESGVM, please contact the ESGVM Secretary (e.m.broens@uu.nl).

6. Activities at ECCMID 2017 and 2018
At ECCMID 2017 in Vienna, two sessions were organized by ESGVM:

- ECCMID 2017 Vienna 1-hour Symposium: Resistance dynamics between the human and the veterinary sector; Organizer(s): EUCIC, ESGVM, ESGAP.
- ECCMID 2017 Vienna 2-hour Symposium: Coagulase-negative staphylococci (CoNS) - true pathogens! Organizer(s): ESGS, ESGVM.

For ECCMID 2018 in Madrid, two proposals by ESGVM have been merged into one symposium entitled "Reservoirs of antimicrobial resistance genes". The symposium is a joint effort involving three other SGs (ESGS, EFWISG, ESGARS).

7. VetCAST
The EUCAST Veterinary Subcommittee on Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (VetCAST) was formed at the ECCMID in 2015. The VetCAST Steering Committee, with PL TOUTAIN in the lead, has been working for more than a year on a position paper describing how VetCAST will determine clinical breakpoints. The paper describes some of the veterinary-specific challenges of defining breakpoints, and it highlights differences to CLSI-VAST, which is the only other international committee defining veterinary breakpoints. The method described in the paper is currently being used for defining clinical breakpoints for florfenicol against Pasteurellaceae in cattle and sheep, that will be published in early 2018. Both the position paper and these first breakpoints are among the deliverables of a 50000 € JPIAMR network grant that VetCAST received for 2017. This grant also co-funded the well-attended workshop “Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (AST) with VetCAST breakpoints: quantitative methods”, which was held in Toulouse in September 2017. The grant will additionally be used for meetings and promotion of VetCAST in early 2018. Currently, the Steering Committee is exploring more future funding sources of VetCAST.

8. Other issues
- Presently 60 members are affiliated to the group.