BACTERIAL SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

Annual report to end of July 2012.

Membership

Core group: Catherine Ison (London, Chair), Frances Keane (Truro, Secretary), Justin Gaffney (London, Treasurer), Sarah Alexander (London, website), S. Uthayakumar (Stevenage, Microscopy course co-ordinator). Beng Goh (London, Dark-field microscopy course organiser), Phillip Hay (London, OGM co-ordinator) and Paul Benn (London, Research project organiser)

General membership: Caroline Carder (London), Catherine Lowndes (London), Elizabeth Claydon (Barnstaple), Patrick Horner (Bristol), Nigel O’Farrell (London); Jonathan Ross (Birmingham)

Resignations: Andrew Benzie (London)

Significant activities

- The BSIG steering group held a teleconference in October 2011 and the main meeting of the general membership was held in March 2012. Jonathan Ross has stood down as treasurer of the BSIG on taking up the post of BASHH treasurer.

- Promotion of the DVD on Microscopy of STIs continues with over 600 DVDs sold.

- The protocol and ethics application were completed for the feasibility study to determine the time taken for NAATs tests to become negative following treatment for Chlamydia trachomatis and Neisseria gonorrhoeae in men and women. This initiative is being led by Paul Benn on behalf of the BSIG.

Outputs

- The BSIG organised the Afternoon OGM on Friday 16th March 2012, which was coordinated by Phillip Hay on Genomics and STIs. The speakers were:
  
  o Nick Thomson (Sanger Institute): Chlamydia genomics: back to biology
  
  o Jane Carlton (New York University): Genomics and epidemiology of Trichomonas vaginalis;
  
  o Brian Spratt (Imperial College London): Whole genome sequencing – who has sex with whom?

  o The talks were followed by a lively debate on Prioritising resources: Which organism next? Mycoplasma genitalium (Paddy Horner, Bristol) or Trichomonas vaginalis (John White, London).

- Two microscopy courses were held in October 2011 and February 2012 and one dark-field microscopy course ran in June 2012. These courses continue to be oversubscribed and well received.

Future plans

- The programme for the March 2013 OGM is being developed around the theme of Genital Ulcer Disease.

- A proposal is being prepared to develop an E book of the Laboratory manual for the microscopy of STIs, for which there are no further hard copies available.
• Following ethics approval and in collaboration with Dr Gabriel Schrembi in Manchester, the feasibility study will commence early in 2013.

• Both microscopy courses will continue to be organised in 2013.