Section: Special Interest Group

Bacterial Special Interest Group

Membership

Core Group

Cathy Ison, London, Chair
Frances Keane, Truro, Secretary
Justin Gaffney, London, Treasurer
S. Uthayakumar, London, Microscopy course coordinator
Michael Perry, Cardiff, OGM organiser
Suneeta Soni, Brighton, Webmaster

General Membership

Sarah Alexander, London
Amanda Samarawickrama, London
Elizabeth Claydon, Barnstaple
Rachel Drayton, Cardiff
Kirstine Eastick, Edinburgh
Paddy Horner, Bristol
Nigel O’Farrell, London
Catherine Lowndes, London
Achyuta Nori, London
Tariq Sadiq, London

Resignations

Jonathan Ross, Birmingham
Paul Benn, London

Objectives:

- To promote communication between microbiologists and clinicians involved in the diagnosis and treatment of bacterial sexually transmitted infections by: offering courses in specialist areas e.g. microscopy course, production of educational material and organisation of symposia on new areas of interest.

Significant activities

- The BSIG contributed and commented on the STI testing tables and the TV guidelines, and commented on the NGU and CT guidelines for the CEG.
- The BSIG organised its annual OGM on Friday 14\textsuperscript{th} March 2014
- The BSIG organised two microscopy courses on 13\textsuperscript{th} October 2013 and 17\textsuperscript{th} May 2014 including a pilot of a competency assessment.
- Sales of the DVD on Microscopy of STIs continued.
- Planning and preparation of a specification for development of an APP to replace the DVD on Microscopy of STIs took place.
Collection of specimens and testing 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 was initiated.

The BSIG website was updated.

**Performance/Outputs in the year 2013/14**

- The BSIG organised the March OGM on the theme STI Molecular Diagnostics: Present and Past. The speakers were:
  - Dr Magnus Unemo, Challenges with the diagnosis and treatment of gonorrhoea.
  - Dr Daniela Höfler, A syndromic approach to the detection of sexually transmitted pathogens
  - Professor Nick Thomson, Next generation sequencing for sexually transmitted pathogens direct from patient samples
  - Dr Pam Sonnenberg, NATSAL and *Mycoplasma genitalium*
  - There was also a debate on ‘Is the increase in pharyngeal gonorrhoea real?’ with Dr John White speaking for the motion and Michael Perry speaking against.

- Two Microscopy courses were held during 2013-14 led by Dr S. Uthayakumar and Dr Elizabeth Claydon and continue to be oversubscribed and well received. The content of the course continues to be updated in response to feedback. Dr Claydon undertook a competency assessment which she piloted on eight individuals who attended the microscopy course. The individuals were sent a set of slides as a competency test and requested that they attend the next course and assessed slides under examination conditions. This exercise, whilst very useful, was very time consuming and the pilot showed that management of a competency assessment exercise would require full time person.

- A specification for an APP to replace the DVD on Microscopy of STIs has been prepared by Dr Frances Keane and Prof Cathy Ison following meetings and discussions with three companies. The whole BSIG has undertaken a review of the content of the DVD to identify areas that need updating.

- Collection and testing of specimens for the feasibility study to determine optimum time for test of cure has been completed at the London centre.

**Future plans**

- Plans for programme for the March 2015 OGM are underway with the theme of Non-gonococcal urethritis and are being led by Michael Perry.
- The Microscopy course will be held twice during this year 2014-15
- Further work will be undertaken to obtain costs, select a provider and update the content for production of the APP on Microscopy of STIs.
- Analysis and reporting of the data from the Research project will be prepared for publication.
- Further development of the website will be undertaken by Dr Suneeta Soni and Dr Sarah Alexander.

Submitted by Professor Cathy Ison, Chair of BSIG