Section:  (eg Special interest group)

Name of Group/branch: Bacterial Special Interest Group

Membership

Core Group

Cathy Ison                      London, Chair
Frances Keane                  Truro, Secretary
S. Uthayakumar                 London, Microscopy course coordinator
Sarah Alexander               London, Joint webmaster
Suneeta Soni                   Brighton, Joint webmaster
Michael Perry                  Cardiff, OGM organiser
Treasurer post is vacant

General Membership

Elizabeth Claydon              Barnstaple
Rachel Drayton                 Cardiff
Kirstine Eastick               Hull
Helen Fifer                    London
Justin Gaffney                 London
Emma Harding-Esch             London
Phil Hay                       London
Paddy Horner                  Bristol
Bavithra Nathan                London
Achyuta Nori                   Edinburgh
Nigel O’ Farrell               London
Sheel Patel                    London
Tariq Sadiq                    London
Amanda Samarawickrama         London
John Saunders                  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

- Dr John Saunders, Clinical Champion of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme, Public Health England and Dr Emma Harding-Esch, Principal Scientist at PHE/ADREU Epidemiology Lead & Programme Manager (St. George’s) joined the group.
The BSIG organised its annual scientific meeting on Friday 18th March 2016 which was held at the King’s Fund.

The BSIG organised two microscopy courses on 24 October (28 attendees) and 14th May 2016 (32 attendees).

Initiation of project to convert the Microscopy of STIs DVD to a Responsive website and App.

Sales of the DVD on Microscopy of STIs.

Update of gonorrhoea guidelines

Completion of testing and presentation of data 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.

Response to requests for comments Standard Microbiology Investigations (SMI)

Updating of the BSIG webpage.

Performance/Outputs in the year 2015/16

In the new shorter format of the scientific meetings, the March meeting included a talk on the Vaginal microbiome given by Suzanna Francis. This was followed by a debate on ‘Bacterial vaginosis is merely an imbalance in vaginal ecology and not a sexually transmitted infection’. Dr Phillip Hay (London) spoke for the motion and Dr Janet Wilson (Leeds) spoke against. The session concluded with an Honorary Life Lecture given by Professor by Cathy Ison, who is the founder and current chair of the Bacterial Special Interest Group. Michael Perry has organised these meetings for the last 3 years with considerable success and stood down following this meeting.

The microscopy courses continue to be led by Dr S. Uthayakumar and Dr Libby Claydon assisted by Drs John Saunders, Amanda Samarawickrama and Bavithra Nathan for the Bacterial SIG and others from Imperial College London. The course evaluation remains excellent and spaces are over-subscribed.

The development of the responsive website was initiated early in 2016. A sample website was delivered in April 2016 and the structure and content are under detailed review. A report was sent to the BASHH board meeting in June 2016.

The DVD on Microscopy of STIs continues to sell with over 750 copies sold to date.

The gonorrhoea guidelines are being updated by a group led by Dr Tariq Sadiq and Dr Helen Fifer and including Dr John Saunders and Dr Suneeta Soni. The work is ongoing.

Data collected from the Feasibility study has been analysed to inform an appropriate time to test of cure for both gonorrhoea and chlamydial infections. Two oral presentations, given by Dr Binta Sultan (University College London) and Hemanti Patel (Public Health England, Colindale) were given at the BASHH annual conference in Oxford, of which one won a prize for the best poster. The manuscript is in draft and awaiting final analyses and review.

Two reviews of UK Standards for Microbiology (SMI) were undertaken and responses submitted; SMI V 11: HIV screening and confirmation - completed mid-May. SMI V 37: *Chlamydia trachomatis* infection - testing by Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests (NAAT) - completed end of May.
- The content of the Bacterial SIG website was reviewed and updated by Dr Suneeta Soni.

**Future plans**

- Plans for the 2017 scientific meeting organised by the Bacterial SIG are underway and will be led by Dr Achyuta Nori.
- Microscopy courses will continue and are planned for October 2016 and May 2017.
- Completion and launch of the Website and App to replace the DVD on Microscopy of STIs.
- Gonorrhoea guidelines will be sent for review by the Bacterial SIG and then submitted into the consultation process.
- Submission of manuscript for peer review on 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.
- Continual review and updating of the Bacterial SIG webpage.

Submitted by Catherine Ison  
Chair Bacterial Special Interest Group