

Meeting Report

EASI Forum

Porto, September 11, 2008

Participants: Allan Wiik (DK), Ricard Cervera (E), Aresio Plaza (E), Ulrich Sack (D), Xavier Bossuyt (B), Lucile Musset (F), Nicole Fabien (F), Walter Fierz (CH), Stephan Regenass (CH), Markku Viander (FIN), Manfred Herold (A), Alberto Sinico (I), Carlos Dias (PT), Jan Damoiseaux (NL), Yehuda Shoenfeld (Isr)

Phadia: Michael Haaß (D) (Protocol), Nina Olschowka (D), Dietmar Germadnik (A), Walter Ineichen (CH), Juan Jimenez (E), Gerben Zuiderveld (NL), Udo Schlosser (D), Paulo Dias (PT)

Protocol: Michael Haaß

Discussion Topics and Decisions

Presentations of the EASI Projects proposed by the EASI Steering Group for 2007

EASI Projects for 2008/2009

1. Booklet for family doctors

The example chapter of the Family Doctors Booklet about *Mysthenia Gravis* was prepared by Jan Damoiseaux and Marc de Baets from The Netherlands.

Co-Authors are A. Fontana (CH), H. Schneider (D) and F. Blaes (D). Their feedback to the manuscript is still missing. Michael Haass will send a reminder and ask for comments within the next week.

To speed up the preparation of the booklet, the example chapter should be sent to the other authors without waiting for the comments from the co-authors.

In the accompanying letter the authors will be asked to confirm within two weeks that they agree to write the chapter within the time frame given. The authors should keep in mind that the booklet is for general physicians and not for specialists and scientists.

The deadline for the preparation of the chapters is December 31st, 2008.

The authors should send the chapters of the booklet to Michael Haass, who will prorate them to the EASI Core Team members for final reviewing.

Publication of the booklet is planned for the Dresden Symposium on Autoantibodies in September 2009. There are two options for the publication of the booklet:

- Public publisher
 - like PABST Scientific Publishers, Lengerich, Germany
 - Springer Verlag, Berlin
- Printing and distribution of the booklet through Phadia

There was an agreement in the EASI Forum that the second option should be chosen as it is not expected that anybody will look for this booklet in a regular bookshop.

2. EASI Website

The draft version of the new EASI Website was presented.

Each national EASI Team will get two web-areas for their local communication. Both will be run in the local language. One area will be public for everybody who is interested in the activities of the national teams. One area will be restricted for EASI team members only (login with password protection).

The EASI Steering Group will run the websites in English. Here also an overview about the activities of the whole EASI Network will be given.

It is planned to go online with the first version of the international website in January 2009.

The administration of the website will be supported by Phadia:

- Webmaster of the website is Catharina Wollert, Phadia AB, Uppsala, Sweden.
- Main administrators are Michael Haass and Nina Olschowka for the whole EASI Network
- Local administrators are the Phadia coordinators of the EASI Teams.

The link to the EASI Network websites is www.easi-network.com.

Proposals for additional pages of the website:

- Congress list (with links to the congresses' websites)
- Links to other groups with comparable topics (with explanations), e.g. EULAR working group
- Comments about congresses held (organizer of the congress should be asked to present a short summary about the congress with the most important results and messages)
- Pictures
- Comments about books which were recently published (summary, recommendation, content list, cover picture)
- Actual publications from the area of autoimmunity (Nina Olschowka will send interesting autoimmunity-related articles to the EASI Steering Group members. Each member will grade the paper with points of a scale from 1(worst) - 5 (best) and send the grade to Nina Olschowka. With an average grade of 3 or more per member the article will be put in the EASI literature list as "interesting to read". A pdf of the article could be put on the restricted areas of the website).

All members of the EASI Forum are also asked to send papers they identified as interesting for other readers to Nina Olschowka to be included in the review.

3. Comparative evaluation of automated methods for autoantibodies testing as a multicentre study in Europe

The multicentre study about the performance of the different automated methods used for autoantibody testing in comparison with gold standard methods was discussed at the IUAS committee of the ACR. The committee decided to run the study in the USA.

To evaluate the performance of different assay systems also in Europe, the EASI Steering Group will initiate a similar study.

The study should be divided into

- a routine study with samples randomly selected by the laboratories from their daily practice
- a clinical study including
 - clinically well defined samples provided by different centres of the different EASI groups (2 samples from each centre of a volume of at least 5ml). The patients should show

- no definite signs of the disease at the time of the blood drawing
- the full blown picture of the disease
- control samples as disease samples from non-autoimmune diseases with the same clinical background information and at least 5ml volume
- blood donors.

All samples will be collected centrally, coded and prepared for the shipment to the manufacturers.

At least 10 companies with new technologies in early diagnostics should participate.

The manufacturers who will be selected to participate in the study will be contacted by the EASI Steering Group members and invited to participate in the study. They should run the samples on their test systems and provide the data to the EASI Steering Group for evaluation of the results.

Next Steps:

- Steering Group members will prepare a concept of the study.
- EASI Forum members who are interested to design the study should get in touch with Allan Wiik, Pier-Luigi Meroni or Michael Haass.
- The final design will be discussed at the next EASI Steering Group meeting in Copenhagen, June 2009
- All EASI Forum members are invited to participate in the study and provide the study group with samples. Please get in touch with Pier-Luigi Meroni or Michael Haass to coordinate the activities. As soon as the website is online, the list of needed samples can also be put in there. EASI members can put in the information which samples they will provide.

4. Collection of algorithms for antibodies testing in systemic autoimmune diseases

The algorithms used for autoantibodies testing in Europe are manifold. Even within the countries different laboratories established different procedures. To get an overview, the EASI teams of the network are asked to collect the various algorithms in their countries and identify the most prominent and best version. Together with an analysis of this model, the pros and cons of each approach should be presented at the next EASI Forum meeting. Goal of the discussion about the different versions is to identify a common standard for Europe and discuss the necessary steps to propose a new guideline for Europe.

Please, work in the teams to present the algorithm with its pros and cons at the next EASI Forum in Dresden. Algorithms will also be collected on the EASI website.

Next EASI Forum Meeting

The next EASI Forum Meeting will be held attached to the Dresden Autoantibodies Symposium in September 2009

Freiburg, September 29th, 2008

Michael Haass

Attachments:

- List of authors for the EASI Family Doctors Booklet
- Instructions for the Authors
- Letter to the authors
- Model Chapter about Myasthenia Gravis