

RESPIRATORY MEDICINE RESEARCH IN THE UK: RAISING THE PROFILE

Prioritisation Workshop

Tuesday 28 February 2006. Asthma UK, Summit House
70 Wilson Street, London EC2A 2DB
9.15am - 4.00pm

Chaired by Professor John Price and Professor Chris Haslett

Minutes

1. Welcome

Professor Price welcomed delegates to the offices of Asthma UK and thanked all for their attendance. Professor Price then explained the programme for the day, outlined the evacuation procedure in the event of an emergency and welcomed Professor Stephen Holgate.

2. Introduction and update on events since 17 October 2005

Professor Holgate thanked delegates for attending the workshop and began by outlining the achievements of the UK respiratory research community, respiratory charities and associated organisations. Professor Holgate then continued by reviewing the outcomes of the first 'Respiratory Medicine Research in the UK: Raising the Profile' meeting held in October 2005. Professor Holgate highlighted the importance of collaboration, capacity building and prioritisation in the future success of research into respiratory disease. Finally, Professor Holgate urged all delegates to listen carefully to the presentations that followed his introduction, and to focus on the aims of the workshop in forming unified research priorities during the afternoon discussions.

3. Presentations

Prior to the workshop, various organisations were asked to construct lists of priority areas for respiratory research in their particular area of interest and to provide scenarios explaining why these priorities had been selected. The outcomes of this exercise were presented by the following representatives of the various respiratory research organisations.

- Professor Tak Lee - Asthma UK, BARS
- Professor Neil Barnes - Asthma UK, CARS and British Thoracic Society (BTS) Guideline Groups
- Professor Moira Whyte - British Lung Foundation (BLF)

- Dr Kim Harrison - British Association of Lung Research
- Professor Warren Lenney - Medicines for Children, British Paediatric Respiratory research Society (BPRS), BTS Research Committee
- Professor David Price - General Practice Airways Group (GPIAG)

Copies of all presentations are included as an appendix to this document.

Following the presentations, Professor Price thanked all speakers. Professor Haslett explained the nature of the afternoon discussion session and its aims in bringing together the information contained in the morning's presentations. Professor Price closed the morning session by thanking all delegates and indicating that lunch and refreshments were available.

4. Discussion groups

Delegates were divided into three groups of approximately equal size. These groups were chaired by Professor Chris Haslett ('blue group'), Professor John Price ('green group') and Professor Peter Calverley ('red group'). Each group was tasked with discussing the morning's presentations and identifying 5-6 overarching priority themes for respiratory research.

5. Consolidation of priorities & plenary

Dame Helena Shovelton facilitated the consolidation of the afternoon's discussions by reiterating the aims of the workshop. She asked the Chairmen of the 3 groups to outline the results of each group's discussions. The priority lists from each group were:

Green Group

- Mechanisms of airways/vascular obstruction
- Mechanisms of lung injury/repair/regeneration
- Early life events and development of lung disease
- Phenotypic description - heterogeneity of response
- Host microorganism interaction and development of acute/chronic lung disease

Blue Group

- Airways disease
- Lung cancer
- Lung infections
- Lung injury/scarring
- Developing and ageing lungs

Red Group

- Phenotyping respiratory disease - natural history, new markers, imaging, relevance to genotyping, interaction.
- Ageing/injury/repair of the failing lung - disease, progression
- Early life origins of lung disease - genetic

- Infection - host organism interaction in the lungs
- Severe asthma/COPD/lung cancer
- Tissue regeneration - stem cells

In addition, it was noted that there are many 'cross-cutting' issues which apply to many themes. These include:

- Epidemiology including causation and prevention
- Imaging
- Genetics
- Biomarkers
- Animal models
- Developing novel treatments and delivering care

Helena Shovelton highlighted the similarity between each list and began to compile the common themes the aim of identifying 5-6 themes that would combine the work of all three groups. The discussion was opened up to all delegates for amendment and refinement. After much discussion, the following list (in no order of importance) of overarching priority themes was compiled:

- Mechanisms of lung injury, repair, regeneration & malignancy.
- Early life events, development & lung ageing.
- Lung infection & host response.
- Phenotyping of respiratory disease in the 21st century.
- Delivery of care in respiratory disease.
- Airways disease.

This list was agreed by all delegates.

6. Closing Remarks & Next Steps

Professor Holgate thanked Helena for her efforts and expressed delight at the overlap between the lists put together by the individual groups in isolation. Professor Holgate explained that the final list of themes will need to be fleshed out with scenarios explaining why each theme has been selected and what it encompasses. Professor Holgate continued by suggesting that this information should form part of a document that will outline the burden of lung disease, present the list of priority themes and explain how this list was compiled and provide scenarios for each priority theme. Professor Holgate expressed the importance of being inclusive when putting this information together such that the entire respiratory research community feels ownership of its content.

Professor Holgate noted that following the production of this document, thought and discussion would then be required to determine how the document would be disseminated and to identify the practical steps that could be taken to implement its use. Professor Neil Barnes highlighted the need for the document to thoroughly explain why these themes have been chosen. Dr Mike

Morgan urged that the document should include justification of the importance of research in terms of health economics and to include the need for training.

It was suggested that the final draft document should be prepared in time for presentation at the Summer BTS meeting, 14-16 June 2006.

Professor Holgate suggested that the next immediate step should be the formation of sub-groups of the community (including a leader for each group) to write scenarios for each theme and that these scenarios should then be refined and agreed by the wider community.

Professor Holgate concluded that and closed by thanking all the organisations and delegates for taking part in such a successful workshop.

Ian Jarrold
Research Manager
British Lung Foundation
On behalf of BLF, BTS, Asthma UK, BALR, GPIAG and BPRS.

08 March 2006