

UK Respiratory Research Strategy Committee

New opportunities for 2008

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2007 proved to be a very productive year for the UKRRC. Working with Philippa Major, the Collaborative finalised the first prioritisation exercise, drawing together consensus on a list of clinical questions. Disease areas agreed for this first prioritisation exercise were Paediatric Lung Health, Asthma, COPD, and Lung Fibrosis. We are now investigating resources to support a project manager on a more long term basis, in order that we can further develop the prioritisation process, working with the UK comprehensive research networks to translate the exercise into funded studies. NIHR are aiming to complete set-up of the 25 networks by April 2008.

In his role as member of the Translation Medicine Board at the Office for Strategic Coordination of Health Research, Professor Stephen Holgate is well placed to report back to UKRRC on future funding initiatives. At the last meeting of the Collaborative, Professor Holgate stressed the importance of ensuring that the UKRRC connect with calls for funding through the MRC, with funding grants available of £605 million for 2008-2009, £658 million for 2009-2010, and £707 million for 2010-2011. With this in mind it is imperative that younger researchers engage with this process. A report by Annette Duck on the successful UKRRC symposium for young research at the BTS Winter Meeting is detailed below. A similar event at the 2008 Winter Meeting is planned.

The National Library for Health was welcomed as a co-member of the Collaborative and Dr Mark Everard will represent the

Library at future meetings. Dr Everard has written a useful overview of the Library's work for this issue of the Newsletter.

Arrangements for the joint meeting of UKRCC and National Cancer Research Institute to explore opportunities for research in COPD and lung cancer are now well advanced. Dr Aoife Regan from NCRI has drawn up an excellent programme with an audience of invited key players, co-chaired by Dr Mick Peake and Professor Stephen Holgate. The meeting aims to:

- Increase understanding and promote co-operation between oncology researchers and COPD researchers

- To identify opportunities for research at the interface of oncology and respiratory medicine (to include resources such as biospecimen banks)

- To think about how to engage with funders to actively promote this type of research

- To examine further opportunities for improving communication between the oncology world and respiratory medicine world

A full report of the outcomes of this meeting, which will be held at the end of February 2008, will be included in the next Newsletter.

The opportunities now available to the respiratory community to engage with the research agenda are fast opening up. It is hoped that 2008 will provide the perfect juncture to take forward our hopes and plans and build on the work we have done to date.

Newsletter No. 6
January 2008



Young Researchers Symposium at BTS Winter Meeting

Annette Duck (ARNS)

The Rutherford Room was packed with enthusiastic young (and not so young), would be, up and coming, budding respiratory researchers during the 'Young Researchers' Symposium' at this year's Winter BTS meeting. The session was successfully chaired by Dr. Rachel Garrod. The eager audience was given a tantalising, refreshing 'run through' on how to get started in research and what makes an outstanding, successful research funding application.

Professor Wisia Wedzicha, editor of Thorax, opened the session with an encouraging resume on the basics of 'How to get pub-

lished'. By reminding us that editors get far more submissions than they can possibly publish, she suggested that we look at our work objectively, and ruthlessly ask ourselves how an editor might view our work, and how important it might be to the international readership. She suggested that we familiarise ourselves with the journal before submitting, write appropriately, following all their submission instructions, if we are to avoid disappointment. Titles and abstracts were important as they 'engaged' the editor, who would be looking for something new, unique and of interest to their readership.

Dr. Clare McVicker from the Wellcome Trust, Dr. Jana Voigt from the Medical Research Council and Mr. Ian Jarrold from the British Lung Foundation followed, giving us an overview of what funding streams, fellowships and project grants were available from their particular organisations which (they reminded us) were detailed on their websites. Each reflected on what makes an outstanding, acceptable application, stressing what determines quality, as opposed to mediocrity. The importance of providing preliminary data, choosing a supervisor with a good research track record, and conducting the research within a well-established research environment were all factors considered important when reviewing funding applications from these organisations.

From the personal viewpoint of a successful young researcher, Dr Rachel Davies from Cambridge ended the session echoing the views of the previous speakers and went on to describe some of the hidden extra benefits of doing research: the ability to develop good time management skills, being able to thoroughly understand statistics, computers, databases and spreadsheets were for her, all important skills. Finally having the pleasure to write up your research results for a peer review journal were all factors that she felt enhances overall personal development.

Dr Rachel Garrod chaired the session skilfully, encouraging questions from the audience, thus stimulating a healthy discussion with the panel of speakers.

The session ended positively, filling us with enthusiasm, but giving us some know and understanding as to how to embark on a career in research and what the elements of a successful research project and researcher might include.

National Library for Health

Dr Mark Evarard

The Respiratory Specialist Library [<http://www.library.nhs.uk/respiratory>] is part of the wider National Library for Health. It aims to help professionals and patients use best current knowledge in decision making. The Respiratory Specialist Library is a collection of respiratory related resources that have been catalogued and indexed to make them quickly and easily accessible. These include NICE guidance, guidance from other national and international bodies such as the BTS, Cochrane systematic reviews, Clinical Knowledge Summaries (CKS), Database of Abstract of Reviews of Effects (DARE), Health Technology Assessments and Research Findings Register (ReFeR). It also provides access to many of the most important journals so that these can be accessed from home or in the community.

The library attempts to include all important resources that might be of benefit to those involved in the care of patients with respiratory disorders. The news service should help health care providers keep up to date with the most recent developments and topical items that patients may raise. Future work will include more National Knowledge Weeks highlighting new information that has become available over the previous year. Suggestion as to how the resource might be improved are always welcome and the informa-

tion specialist, Rob Duffin, involved in maintaining and developing the library is always happy to help in locating and collating evidenced based resources. The library can be contacted via the e-mail facility on the front page.

Dates for your Diary

UKRRRC Committee meetings have been arranged for:

Friday 22nd February 2008

Tuesday 24th June 2008

Tuesday 25th November 2008

All at 10.00am, at BTS HQ, 17 Doughty Street, London WC1N 2PL. Please put these dates in your diary