
Minutes EASI Forum

Leipzig, April 7, 2016; 12:30 – 14:00 h

Participants: Yehuda Shoenfeld (IL), Nicola Bizzaro (IT), Xavier Bossuyt (BE), Jan Willem Cohen Tervaert (NL), Ulrike Demel (AT), Carlos Dias (PT), Catharina Eriksson (SE), Nicole Fabien (FR), Anna-Maija Haapala (FI), Ingmar Heijnen (CH), Jussi Kantele (FI), Pier-Luigi Meroni (IT), Lucile Musset (FR), Aresio Plaza (ES), Rille Pullerits (SE), Antonella Radice (IT), Ulrich Sack (DE), Maria José Sousa (PT), Tatjana Sundic (NO), Barbara Trezzi (IT), Raivo Uibo (EE), Markku Viander (FI)

Thermo Fisher Scientific: Nina Olschowka (Global Marketing AI)
Teresa Araujo (PT), Martin Brandenburg (DE), Paulo Dias (ES), Felix Gastager (AT), Michael Haaß (DE), Thomas Horn (AT), Åsa Lans (SE), Lilian Larsson (SE), Anne Omholt (NO), Aleksandra Schenning (SE), Sune Sved (FI), Petra Zieglmayer (AT), Gerben Zuiderveld (NL)

Protocol: Nina Olschowka

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. New EASI website – status
3. EASI and the Horizon 2020
4. ANA, CCP and RF questionnaire for Clinicians
5. Questionnaire on ANCA for labs
6. Questionnaire on ANCA for clinicians
7. ANCA study
8. Dutch initiative: national validation of autoantibody assays for certified labs
9. Summary and Outlook; next EASI Forum meeting

1. Welcome

Jan Damoiseaux and Manfred Herold apologized because they could not attend the meeting. However, both have informed Nina in advance about progress in different projects.

2. New EASI website – status

As informed in the last EASI forum meeting in Dresden, Thermo Fisher cannot provide the platform for www.easi-network.com any longer. Instead, a non-profit organization could be supported who creates and runs the site. Discussions are ongoing that the “Autoimmunity Network” is changed into a legal entity so that it could be a legal contract partner. Time line for finalizing the contract: end of June 2016.

3. EASI and “Horizon 2020”

Horizon 2020 is a collaboration of different standardization initiatives for new reference materials in Autoimmunity. Pier-Luigi Meroni is one of the coordinators. He had planned to apply for a financial support (grant) with the help of an agency. However, we would need a fee for the submission of around 17,000 Euro. Pier-Luigi has an okay from several diagnostic companies that they finance the fee. However, timelines were so short that it was not possible to apply this year. Instead, we will prepare the application and submit it for 2017.

4. Questionnaire on ANA/CCP/RF for Clinicians

The questionnaire was done in Austria more than a year ago and in France lately. In France, 31 clinicians answered the questionnaire. Nicole Fabien presents shortly some of the results. Nicole Fabien, Lucile Musset, Maria José Sousa, Jan Damoiseaux, Manfred Herold and Nina Olschowka build a working group. They will validate with the

results from Austria and France if the questionnaire with its actual questions is short and clear enough and if the results are useful for seeing difficulties in the current routine of ordering ANA/ACPA/RF testing. Goal is to put the questionnaire as electronic questionnaire on the website of Autoimmunity Network and, in case that the feedback is too low, spread it out through local medical organizations.

5. Questionnaire on ANCA for Labs

Jan Damoiseaux will show the results at the EASI session on Friday. In total 414 labs from 11 European countries participated. A publication is in planning. The Forum Meeting proposes that the paper should be submitted in the same journals as the questionnaire for ANAs - to Ann.Rheum.Dis.or J.Clin.Exp.Rheumatol. In case that the paper will be rejected, Jan shall contact Yehuda.

6. Questionnaire on ANCA for Clinicians

Jan-Willem Cohen-Tervaert has finalized the questionnaire. He proposes that it will be run in the Netherlands, comparable to the ANA questionnaire in France. Then we can evaluate if the answers are helpful and can lead us to develop recommendations.

7. ANCA study

Xavier Bossuyt will present the multicenter ANCA study at the EASI session on Friday. The paper is submitted and further papers, e.g. a consensus paper will follow. The new PR3 and MPO reference material from the IFCC/IRMM as well as the material from the CDC shall be tested with the samples.

8. Dutch initiative: national validation of autoantibody assays for certified labs

It was decided in a meeting in the Netherlands lately, that this initiative should go on. The idea: 2 to 3 bigger labs evaluate a new test and put the results together. This evaluation results can be bought by smaller labs. EASI groups in other countries such as Belgium and Finland have discussions how to support accredited labs in establishing a routine for validation of new AI tests. Nicola Bizzaro proposes that he puts together the minimum validations which should be done. Ulrich Sack who has been working for many years on accreditation volunteers to build and lead a working group with Nicola Bizzaro, Xavier Bossuyt and Anna-Maija Haapala to discuss how this project could be driven.

9. Summary and Outlook; next EASI Forum meeting

The next EASI Forum meeting will take place at the CORA meeting in March 9-11 2017 in Bologna, Italy.

However, discussions after the meeting revealed that there is a high interest for two meetings per year to keep the forum meeting more active. The 10th European Lupus Meeting in Venice on October 5-8 2016 was proposed. Nina will clarify if it is possible to meet there.