

ANNUAL REPORT FROM NordicAST 2011

Since 1 January 2011, Sweden, Norway and Denmark have formed a working group for methodology in antimicrobial susceptibility testing. The name of the group is NordicAST (Nordic Committee on Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing), and the group is organized by the Nordic Society for Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (NSCMID). The group members are appointed by the Swedish Society for Medical Microbiology (three members), the Norwegian Working Group on Antibiotics (NWGA; three members) and the Danish methodology group (Danres-M; three members).

The scope of the group is to work with methodology issues in antimicrobial susceptibility testing. An important part of this task is to maintain breakpoint tables adapted to Nordic traditions and translated to the Nordic languages, as well as providing guidance on how to detect important resistance mechanisms. The group does not work with antimicrobial policy issues, and is not a breakpoint committee that will replace either of the Nordic national breakpoint committees. So far NordicAST has had four regular board meetings, and organized one workshop in antimicrobial susceptibility testing. The next meeting will be held in the end of February 2012.

At present the regular members of the group are Robert Skov (DK), Ulrik S. Justesen (DK), Kristian Schoenning (DK), Arnfinn Sundsfjord (NO), Dagfinn Skaare (NO), Truls Michael Leegaard (NO), Tinna Áhrén (SE), Annika Wistedt (SE) and Christian G. Giske (SE). The group is chaired by Christian G. Giske. Dagfinn Skaare is the scientific secretary of the group, and Ulrik S. Justesen is the treasurer. In addition to the regular members, Gunnar Kahlmeter and Erika Matuschek (both Sweden) are permanently associated members with expertise in EUCAST-questions. Further, Anita Løvås Brekken (NO) and Barbro Olsson-Liljequist (SE) are also associated members, but their presence at meetings is not financed by NordicAST.

The first year NordicAST has generated a surplus of 237.425 DKK (see separate economic balance report from the treasurer). The economy is at this point strong enough to carry expenses related to the four annual meetings. NordicAST's incomes are derived partly from fees paid by industry for attending the yearly workshop, and partly by the surplus generated from the yearly workshop.

The main activities so far for NordicAST have been harmonization of breakpoint tables including recommendations for detecting some clinically important resistance mechanisms, education in the EUCAST disk diffusion method, and not least, the yearly workshop in Gothenburg, attended by around 150 people from various clinical laboratories in the three countries. This year, Iceland and Finland were also represented at the workshop with one representative each (free of charge). We now encourage Iceland and Finland to consider whether they would like to participate at some level in the further development of scientific and educational activities.

Stockholm / Tønsberg / Odense, 31 December 2011.

Christian G. Giske
Chairman

Dagfinn Skaare
Scientific secretary

Ulrik S. Justesen
Treasurer