

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Since 2011, NordicAST has been a working group for methodology in antimicrobial susceptibility testing (AST), organized by the Nordic Society for Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (NSCMID). The group members are appointed by the Swedish Society for Clinical Microbiology (three members), the Norwegian Working Group on Antibiotics (NWGA; three members), the Danish AST methodology group (DANRES-M; three members), and the Finnish methodology group (FiRe; three members). One member represents the Icelandic Laboratory for clinical microbiology. The maximum number of regular members attending a board meeting will thus be 13.

The scope of the group is AST methodology issues. An important part of this task is to maintain breakpoint tables based on EUCAST recommendations, adapted to the conditions in the Nordic countries in terms of traditions, resources and resistance rates. The breakpoint tables are partly translated to Nordic languages, especially the comments that will be communicated to clinicians. Other central activities are to arrange an annual AST workshop for Nordic laboratories as well as webinars, and to provide guidance on how to detect important resistance mechanisms.

In May 2023, the annual workshop was organised in a new venue in Malmö, mostly to benefit easy travel via Copenhagen airport. The workshop had 180 participants and the feedback from them was again mostly positive apart from the venue facilities which will be taken into account for next year's workshop. NordicAST board also continued to have digital educational activities: the NordicAST Bp-table webinar took place on February 2nd with 132 devices participating and 577 accesses of the recording at Youtube. Another webinar on basic AST for routine laboratory staff took place on November 9th. More than a hundred devices participated also there, and the recording at Youtube has been accessed 182 times by now. NordicAST also co-organized a scientific session ("How to use new and old antibiotics in infections caused by MDR Enterobacterales and Pseudomonas") in the annual NSCMID Meeting which took place in Örebro in September.

Explanatory method documents on Detection of ESBL/pAmpC and Detection of CPE were revised, the new versions being published in the beginning of 2024.

The NordicAST board had four meetings: virtual meetings in February and September and a physical meeting before the workshop in Malmö. The year's fourth board meeting was organized in Oslo in the end of November.

By the end of 2023 the regular members of the group were Anna-Karin Smekal (SE), Annika Wistedt (SE), Christian G. Giske (SE), Ingvild Haugan (NO), Arnfinn Sundsfjord (NO), Karianne Wiger Gammelsrud (NO), Barbara J. Holzkecht (DK), Dennis Back Holmgaard (DK), Robert Skov (DK), Kaisu Rantakokko-Jalava (FI), Nathalie Friberg (FI), Heikki Ilmavirta (FI), and Kristjan Helgason (IS). In addition to the regular members, Gunnar Kahlmeter and Erika Matuschek are permanently associated members representing the EUCAST Development Laboratory and Alexander Husby (NO) as a workshop coordinator.

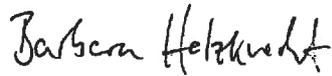
The group was chaired by Barbara Holzkecht in 2023, Kaisu Rantakokko-Jalava was the scientific secretary, Dennis Back Holmgaard the treasurer, Kristjan Helgason the webmaster, Karianne Wiger Gammelsrud the breakpoint table coordinator (assisted by Anna-Karin Smekal, Heikki Ilmavirta and

Ingvild Haugan), Robert Skov the scientific program coordinator of workshop (assisted by Christian Giske and Kaisu Rantakokko-Jalava) and Nathalie Friberg, Annika Wistedt and Alexander Husby coordinated the WS preparations.

In 2023 NordicAST generated a surplus of 122.530,18 DKK and on 31.12.2023 the balance was 640.035,73DKK (see separate economic balance report).

Copenhagen, Turku and Slagelse, January 22nd, 2024

On behalf of NordicAST



Barbara Holzknicht

Chair



Kaisu Rantakokko-Jalava

Scientific secretary



Dennis Back Holmgaard

Treasurer