

MINUTES OF BEST XXXV, CAMBRIDGE UK, APRIL 5TH 2008.

1. Welcome and apologies.

The BEST Chair, Lorna Williamson, gave a warm welcome to Cambridge to all BEST members and guests, especially our distinguished guests Anna-Brite Högman and Lynda Hamlyn, CEO of NHS Blood and Transplant. Rgrettably, several BEST members had to send apologies for this meeting: Mike Murphy, Riitta Kekomaki, Mo Blajchman, Onder Aslan and Dean Elfath.

2. Thanks.

As always, the organisation of BEST meetings is a team effort, and LW gave thanks to Gill Cook and Eileen Seloghie for their great support, to Magdelene and Lucy Cavendish Colleges for first class hospitality, to the BEST band for cheerful entertainment and of course to the manufacturing members for ongoing support.

3. Changes to the membership.

LW welcomed Rick Kaufman to the Transfusion Safety Team as an Associate member, and Lorella Toretta (replacing Lucilla Lecchi) to Cellular Therapies. There were still vacancies in CT, and the Exec would be considering these later today. LW was pleased to report that Margharethe Heiden, of the Paul-Erich Institute, which is the regulatory agency for blood components in Germany, had accepted Honorary Membership, although was unable to attend this meeting. Kate Sivertson has replace Martin Ras for Fresenius. Martin was a great friend to BEST and will be much missed. Unfortunately, several manufacturing members have decided to stand down from BEST: NovoNordisk, Immuncor, Chiron and Zymequest. However, DiaMed have recently agreed to join, and we expect to meet their representatives at the Montreal meeting. BEST is keen to attract more manufacturing members from the Cellular Therapies and IT areas, and the Executive will be discussing this also.

At 2 teleconferences since the last full meeting, the Executive decuded to offer a new category of membership to blood suppliers, at a membership rate of \$10k/year. LW was pleased to report that the American Red Cross has decided to take advantage of this, and their Medical Director, Dr Richard Benjamin, will be attending the Montreal meeting.

4. Electronic book.

Feedback on this had been universally positive and the benefits on costs and weight of luggage appreciated. We will continue to provide travel information and a roster for each meeting.

5. Finance.

The report on the website was noted. There were no specific issues to raise.

6. Puzzler.

LW presented the puzzler, which had the theme of 'Cambridge Luminaries'. It was striking how many of their discoveries were relevant to Transfusion Medicine, not least that of Robin Coombs. There were 3 correct answers, and on the basis of extra information provided, LW presented a print of the Queens' College mathematical bridge to Chris Prowse.

7. Scott Murphy lecture.

This was given by Dr Nick Watkins, Senior Research Associate, Department of Haematology, University of Cambridge on 'Platelet Functional Genomics'. This was a worthy presentation of a study aiming to identify new genes specific to platelets, along with their corresponding proteins.

8. Critique of NEJM paper on age of blood.

In view of the considerable clinical and media interest in the recent NEJM paper claiming poorer outcomes from older blood, an extra item had been added to the agenda. John Hess had provided a critique of this paper to the CC team, but LW brought the issue to the full membership to discuss whether BEST should consider writing to the NEJM officially (John Hess had already done so as an individual). Jim AuBuchon led a discussion of the paper (a retrospective study). The conclusion was that there were many confounders in the data which had not been fully addressed, particularly in presenting an unadjusted comparison of patient outcome. The apparent effect of blood age reported in this study could be fully explained by the greater numbers of units received by patients transfused with older blood. JAuB agreed to draft a letter to NEJM to go out under the BEST heading.

Post-meeting note: an excellent letter was sent to NEJM, but was not selected for publication.

9. New studies.

LW reminded the meeting of the 4 new studies that had been agreed at BEST XXXIV:

- #43- Haemoglobin dosing (Hervig)
- #44-Survey of ABO matching for platelets (Luzano)
- #45- Reporting platelet transfusion trials (Heddle)
- #46- Transfusion reaction survey (Dzik, Heddle).

At this meeting, the following new studies were proposed, all from CT:

- #32-Standardisation of the CFU assay (Reems)
- #47-Transportation of CT products (McKenna, Pamphilon)

#48- Bacterial contamination of CT products (MacMannis, van der Watering).

These were agreed, with the high productivity of the CT team continuing!

10. Future BEST meetings.

BEST XXXVI will be held in the Regency Hyatt Hotel, Montreal, Canada prior to AABB, as follows:

Thursday 2nd October, pm: TS and CC, with the BEST dinner that evening.

Friday 3rd October, am: CS and CT

Friday 3rd October, pm: main meeting.

MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO BOOK THEIR OWN ACCOMMODATION FOR THIS MEETING.

BEST XXXVII will be held in Krakow, Poland, on 25th/26th April 2009.

BEST XXXVIII will be held in New Orleans prior to AABB in autumn 2009.

BEST XXXIX, spring 2010: Lisbon is the current preferred option.

It was noted that the autumn 2010 meeting would mark the twentieth anniversary of BEST (BEST XXXX), and also LW's last meeting as Chair. Depending on finances, a number of options are possible to mark this special occasion. This will be considered by the Executive team.

LW closed by thanking all the members and wished everyone safe journeys home.