

Boston University Medical Campus

Community Liaison Committee (CLC)

National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories (NEIDL)

MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, November 19, 2013

6:00 pm. * 620 Albany Street

ATTENDING

Robert Francis, Co-Chairperson, CLC; Linda Lukas, Co-Chairperson, CLC; Kenneth Nwosu, CLC; Robert Timmerman, CLC; Chayla White, CLC; Valeda Britton, Executive Director, Community Relations/MED, BU; Elizabeth Leary, Director, Community Relations/CRC, BU; Kevin Tuohey, Executive Director, Research Compliance, BU; Ronald Corley, Associate Director, NEIDL; Dr. Igor Kramnik, Associate Professor of Medicine, Director of the Aerobiology Core and Investigator, NEIDL; and community members.

At 6:00 pm, Co-Chair Lukas opened the meeting.

PRESENTATIONS

Tuberculosis Research

Dr. Igor Kramnik, Associate Professor of Medicine, Director of the Aerobiology Core and Investigator, National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories (NEIDL), gave an overview of his Tuberculosis (TB) research. Dr. Kramnik studied and trained with global leaders in the field of TB. At the beginning of his career, he worked as a doctor in Russia with patients with TB. The thinking then was that TB was largely eradicated. However, over the last 50 years, no new drugs have been created to fight TB, even though there are approximately 5 or 6 new antibiotics in the pipeline for testing. Today we are facing more global drug resistant TB. No worldwide TB vaccination program exists.

TB is caused by bacteria that most often affects the lungs. TB requires human hosts and thus can only be spread human to human. It is spread from person to person through the air when people cough or sneeze. The human TB pathogen is over 30,000 years old and is one of the world's top infectious killers.

Dr. Kramnik discussed host susceptibility to TB. Dr. Kramnik uses mouse models of human like TB. This is very important for preclinical testing of new vaccine drugs and drug combinations. As in humans, TB attacks the mouse lungs causing destruction of the lungs as well as a variety of different forms of TB. Dr. Kramnik's research is aimed at developing tests to identify TB susceptible individuals and drugs to increase host resistance to infections. His research has uncovered a gene that makes mice susceptible to TB. By discovering the mechanisms of susceptibility to TB in animals, Dr. Kramnik believes that this research will lead to interventions to correct them.

Dr. Kramnik concluded his presentation by mentioning that each year, the World Health Organization publishes a global TB report. Eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia have reported increases of drug resistant TB. To date there is no reliable test to identify the percentage of the population who is susceptible to active TB.

REGULATORY

Mr. Tuohey reported that an earthquake tabletop emergency response drill will be completed by the end of the year. NEIDL emergency response training has been provided to the Boston Fire Department. BU is meeting with first responders to plan drills for 2014.

Boston University continues to meet with Boston Medical Center to discuss space, training and staffing plans and procedures for suspected or demonstrated exposure to infectious diseases.

EH&S is continuing to refine procedures to assess reliability, suitability and competency of personnel for research in the NEIDL.

ADMINISTRATIVE

The October CLC minutes were approved. It was agreed that the CLC would not meet in December.

COMMUNITY LIAISON REPORT

Ms. Britton gave an update about the BU Community Grant applications. The deadline for grant submission is November 22, 2013.

Mr. Francis informed the group that Acting Police Commissioner Evans would be at the Reggie Lewis Center on Wednesday November 20, 2013 from 1-3 pm.

INSTITUTIONAL BIOSAFETY COMMITTEE (IBC) REPORT

Mr. Timmerman gave an overview of the November 12th IBC meeting and his role on the Boston Biosafety Committee. At the IBC meeting, a number of new protocols were reviewed, including a BSL-4 protocol. Two independent reviewers with BSL-4 experience were also part of the team reviewing the BSL-4 protocol, as were the 3 community members of the IBC.

Mr. Timmerman mentioned that the Boston Biosafety Committee is composed of at least 3 community residents, infectious disease doctors and includes the Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC). At their November meeting, the group discussed their roles and responsibilities and walked through the BPHC regulations on BSL-3 and BSL-4 labs. It is anticipated that they will meet monthly. The Committee is tentatively scheduled to tour the NEIDL on December 17th.

SCIENTIFIC & RESEARCH UPDATE

Dr. Corley told the CLC that BSL-2 researchers continue to move into the NEIDL. Also, NEIDL BSL-4 researchers continue to work in their suits doing simulations using BSL-2 agents. The first group of BSL-4 mentors is being trained by experienced BSL-4 researchers. The BPHC has permitted the BSL-3 TB research. BSL-3 select agent research needs CDC approval. BSL-4 research needs both BPHC and CDC approvals. The State Court case will be heard by the judge on December 11.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM