

Boston University Medical Campus

Community Liaison Committee (CLC)

National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories (NEIDL)

MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

6:30 pm. * Evans Bldg. Room 112A

ATTENDING

James Eliscar, CLC; Joe Lillis, CLC; Jean Lee, CLC; JK Fisher, CLC; Youngjin Jung, CLC; Robert Timmerman, CLC; Valeda Britton, Executive Director, Community Relations/MED, BU; Elizabeth Leary, Director, Community Relations/CRC, BU; Dr. John Connor, BU Department of Microbiology, Associate Professor, NEIDL; Dr. Ronald Corley, BU Department of Microbiology, Director, NEIDL

Meeting opened at 6:40pm

Conversation with Dr. John Connor On His Latest Research

Ms. Britton introduced Dr. Connor. Dr. Connor first presented to the CLC in February 2014. He explained that since 2013, his BSL-2 research has focused on how viruses make you sick and how to stop this from happening. He mentioned that during the ebola epidemic of 2014, it was difficult to diagnose the disease. By collaborating with other researchers internally and externally and with Dr. Selim Unlu, a BU engineering professor, a diagnostic device was developed with funding from the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Connor brought to the meeting a portable photonic device that can provide a rapid, accurate and more affordable way to detect ebola and other hemorrhagic fever diseases in Africa and other resource limited countries. The diagnostic device detects pathogens from blood serum by shining light on a silicone chip that is coated with virus specific antibodies. Dr. Connor mentioned that sample preparation and handling were minimal, so that the device could be deployed quickly and safely for health care workers to use. It is hoped that this device can be efficiently manufactured and its use broadened in the future to detect multiple pathogens simultaneously such as malaria, yellow fever, and four types of dengue.

Administrative:

Meeting Notes for the February CLC meeting were reviewed and will be posted.

NEIDL Update from Dr. Corley:

Dr. Corley mentioned that the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) arrived yesterday for an unannounced inspection of the NEIDL BSL-3 and would be reviewing documents as well as interviewing personnel. The CDC and Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) will inspect the NEIDL's BSL-4 laboratories every year. They will inspect the BSL-3 Select Agent areas every three-year. No permit has been issued by the BPHC to begin BSL-4 research yet. Tours of the NEIDL have been scheduled for new BPD police captains (D-14 and C-6) as well as for the new BU Chief of Police, Kelly Nee. Ms. Nee is a 33-year BPD veteran with an extensive background in threat risk assessment. Dr. Corley noted that the NEIDL was actively recruiting faculty to expand expertise in all NEIDL BSL labs, especially in BSL-3 and to explore insect vectors such as ticks and mosquitos that may cause emerging and reemerging infectious diseases such as zika, powassen and mayaro. As a result of global warming, mosquitos are moving northbound.

Government & Community Affairs Update:

Ms. Leary mentioned that a PDF version of the testimony from the BPHC public meeting of March 6th was available to CLC members. Also, she stated that no hearing date has been set for City Councilor Jackson's Ordinance to ban BSL-4 research. Ms. Britton discussed Summerlab scholarships. She briefly discussed the collaboration between BU and the Boston Area Health Education Center (BAHEC), which is a health careers program for Boston high-school students managed through the BPHC. Students in BAHEC's Summer Enrichment Program will participate in academic and other interactive activities on both the Medical and the Charles River campuses.

Subcommittee Reports:

- **Communications & Community Outreach (CCO)** - Progress continues on developing a communication process for the NEIDL. CCO subcommittee reviewed

communication slides and communication process with the members. The CCO will refine a message matrix at a later date. CLC members present requested that the communications slides and process be presented to the full CLC. They noted that communication should highlight and promote the culture of safety and leadership.

Next CLC Meeting:

TBD