

Boston University Medical Campus

Community Liaison Committee (CLC)

National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories (NEIDL)

MEETING NOTES

Monday June 10, 2019

6:30 pm. * 650 Albany Street Room 715

ATTENDING

Robert Francis, CLC; Joe Lillis, CLC; Jean Lee, CLC; PM Scarlet Ford, CLC; J. Kevin Fisher, CLC; Jim Keeney, CLC; Robert Timmerman, CLC; David Opp, CLC; Valeda Britton, Executive Director, Community Relations/MED, BU; Chimel Idiokitas, Director, Community Outreach/MED, BU; Dr. Gerald Keusch, Associate Director, NEIDL; Dr. Ronald Corley, BU Department of Microbiology, Director, NEIDL

Meeting opened at 6:35pm

Dr. Corley introduced Dr. Gerald Keusch, Director of the Collaborative Research Core at the NEIDL.

BU/NEIDL In the World by Dr. Gerald Keusch:

Dr. Keusch started the meeting by discussing his educational background and his pathway to joining the NEIDL. He received his MD from Harvard Medical School and is Board Certified in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases. Subsequently, he became Chief of Geographic Medicine and Infectious Diseases at Tufts Medical Center. He spent five years as Director of the Fogarty International Center, part of the NIH, focusing on global science and health issues before joining BU in 2004 as Associate Provost for Global Health to help to connect both the Charles River and Medical campuses to collaborate around science and global health research. He became Associate Director for the NEIDL in 2009.

Dr. Keusch emphasized that global health challenges require global collaborations. Connections between first world institutes and third world countries are fruitful for both parties but first trust and partnerships have to be developed as a give and take and with a true belief that both parties are just as important as the other and will benefit by the relationship. We learn as much as we teach.

In 2009, Dr. Keusch joined the NEIDL faculty and started outreach to developed and developing countries to connect with established and potential partners, including other BSL-4 laboratories, to engage in collaborative partnerships. Because of our willingness to exchange ideas and best practices as well as train investigators, the NEIDL has hosted frequent visitors from numerous international countries around the world. Through these global interactions, organic relationships have solidified the NEIDL's positive reputation. For example, the NEIDL has made significant connections with potential partners in India, England, Turkey, Thailand, Japan, France, South Africa, Nigeria and Uganda.

These connections led to the planning of the NEIDL's inaugural symposium (EIDA2Z) on emerging infectious diseases, which occurred in September of 2016. The symposium was well received and helped the NEIDL bring together 150 infectious disease scientists to identify and discuss global health research challenges for the next ten years.

Currently, Dr. Keusch is spending time submitting grants to increase training opportunities for future MD researchers. One such grant is an application to the NIH. Another NIH grant would create an Emerging Infectious Disease Research Center at the NEIDL, partners in Brazil, Nigeria and Uganda, and 1.2 million dollars of funding per year for 5 years. This grant would help create clinical research capabilities to respond and develop therapeutics for outbreaks as well as involve academic partnerships. He is also in the process of implementing a new grant from the Fogarty International Center at NIH together with key colleagues at the NEIDL, the BU Department of Microbiology and BU School of Public Health to improve the basic science background and research training for physicians in Liberia to be capable faculty members and conduct basic and clinical research on emerging infectious diseases.

NEIDL Director Update by Dr. Ron Corley:

Global News:

The second largest Ebola outbreak is occurring in the Democratic Republic of Congo currently. Approximately, 2050 individuals have been infected with Ebola during this outbreak. It is believed that well over 100,000 have been vaccinated and the vaccine has been helpful in reducing the mortality rate of this disease. However, it has been difficult to track the disease, due to attacks on health care facilities and the current civil war.

Stateside, there have been over 1000 confirmed cases of measles thus far, especially in New York, Washington state and Oregon. Massachusetts has had only one confirmed case because of our high immunization rates. It was noted that Pertussis, also known as

“whooping cough,” cases are on the rise. Experts are not sure if the vaccine is a good vaccine. Does it work? Is it effective?

Open Community Meeting:

Dr. Corley thanked CLC members for attending the BU Annual Community Meeting held at the Hampton Inn at Crosstown on March 11, 2019.

New Labs/ Investigators/ Research:

A new investigator will join the NEIDL on July 1st. His work will focus on positive sense RNA viruses involving enteroviruses and flavivirus.

A new shipment of BSL -4 virus islets will arrive at the NEIDL late Summer from Galveston National Laboratories. The NEIDL will continue to follow its well-established transportation plan for this delivery.

Community Activities and Updates:

Ms. Britton informed the CLC of the community engagement activities that are planned for the summer. Community Relations has awarded seven scholarships to BPS high school students to attend Summer Lab. We have also given scholarships to three BPS students to attend BU’s Intro to Careers in Medicine.

We have scheduled tours and panel discussions with college level students using our NEIDL faculty and staff to share real world advice about careers and opportunities in the health care field.

Two NEIDL tours have been planned with high school students from ICM and BAHEC. We will utilize our ID2 program to see what revisions are necessary to offer the program at the high school level.

Lastly, we have awarded 20 scholarships to students from 1st to 6th grade, to attend Coach Jones BU Basketball Summer Clinic on the Charles River Campus beginning on July 1st.

Meeting adjourned

Next Meeting: September 16, 2019