



Newsletter from the Association RT Antibiotics (RTA) (12.07.2019)

On June 24th, 2019, a meeting of the informal group Round Table Antibiotics (group TR Antibiotics) was held in Bern at sitem-insel. The meeting was preceded by the formal constitution of the Association RT Antibiotics (RTA) by the founding members Bea Heim (BH), Rudolf Blankart (RB), Stephen Leib (SL) and Jean-Claude Piffaretti (JCP). More about the Association is given below.

As mentioned, the current meeting of the group TR Antibiotics was still informal, indeed the first General Assembly of the new constituted Association RTA will occur on October 10th, 2019 (10h15-11h45) in Bern, sitem-insel.

During the informal meeting of the informal group TR Antibiotics, the following main topics have been addressed:

Past activities of the informal group TR Antibiotics

JCP reviewed the past activities performed by the core entity (formed by BH, SL, RB, JCP) which focused mainly on the promotion at the political level of the awareness of a need of a new model to bring innovative antibiotics to the market. At the end of the day, the core entity has been successful in raising consciousness on the resistance and economic issues but not much more (see previous Newsletters). We are nevertheless in a “momentum” that has to be exploited, particularly after the announcement of the bankruptcy filing of Achaogen a few months after having received the FDA approval for an innovative and needed antimicrobial, *i.e.* plazomicin. This situation, as similar ones which will probably happen in the future, is devastating for the SMEs that rely on investors for their business in the field of R&D of new antibiotics.

Short presentations

Additional input on the difficulties encountered by the new start-up have been provided by some participants, including a short presentation from S.N. Hobbie and R. Zbinden (Zurich University) on their experience within their university.

Presentation of the newly founded Association RTA and call for membership

Because of the particular “momentum” to be exploited and to increase the efficiency, visibility and strength of the informal group TR Antibiotics, the core entity decided to transform it in an Association RT Antibiotics (RTA), *i.e.* a non-profit association that is regulated by its statutes and by Articles 60 ff. of the Swiss Civil Code. This organisation is structured, simple and flexible. As mentioned above, the Association has been constituted by the founders members BH, RB, SL and JCP, the latter chairing it for the current period. The Statutes (in German and English) are attached to this Newsletter.

The chief points of the Statutes are summarized below:

- The main aim of the association is to promote Switzerland's contribution to innovation, research, and development of measures against antimicrobial resistance, particularly by promoting the market introduction of new active substances, which should be available to all countries worldwide;
- Members include ordinary members (natural persons) and associated members (legal persons);

- No fees are requested to become a member of the Association but donations are welcome;
- The General Assembly is the supreme authority of the Association and defines its general strategy;
- An Executive Committee (EC) manages the day-to day business of the Association and take all actions to promote the purpose of the Association;
- Working Groups may be established to deal with specific issues related to the RTA strategy;
- The EC is presently formed by JCP (president), BH (Vice President), RB (Secretary), SL (Treasurer).

The Statutes and the EC composition can be easily changed by the General Assembly, without any need of approval by an additional authority.

A website (roundtableantibiotics.ch) as well a banking account will be shortly available.

All the participants of the group TR Antibiotics are invited to apply for membership, at the moment through an email to JCP (piffaretti@interlifescience.ch). (No fee is requested for membership).

Joint venture with GARDP (Global Antibiotic Research & Development Partnership)

The core group of the informal group TR Antibiotics met recently in Geneva with GARDP (M. Balasegaram and J.-P. Paccaud) and decided to work together joining the international dimension of GARDP and the visibility at the Swiss political level of TRA in order to fulfil the aims of both organisations, in particular in stimulating the Swiss government to be more proactive at the European level (especially working together with “small” countries that have the same antimicrobial resistance and antibiotics problems as Switzerland) in discussing and proposing innovative economic modes to finance new antimicrobials.

Contacts with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)

Contacts at the high level have been taken with the FDFA to implement the initiative described in the previous item in collaboration with GARDP. The idea is to involve a number of European countries together to Switzerland to achieve this aim. The response showed interest from the FDFA and work is currently progressing.

RTA and future strategies

During the whole meeting, several proposals have been made concerning the future activities of the group (now of the Association). To summarize:

Main points of action:

- Pursue the aim of promoting Switzerland's contribution for an innovative economic model aiming to the availability of new antimicrobials worldwide;
- Enhance the communication dealing with the antibiotic crisis, particularly its perception at the political, local and general levels.

Other points to consider (e.g. trough Working Groups of the Association)

- Better deliver support to SMEs and start-up, particularly to finance phase II and II clinical studies within the universities having generated innovative and potential interesting results through their research;
- To increase the general perception of the problem, define actual numbers and facts at the local and regional levels (including hospitals) dealing with the present and future consequences of antimicrobial resistance if nothing substantial is done in the near-medium future.

Remember:

- **Apply for membership to the Association (either as natural or legal persons, or both): the more we are, the more we are strong.**
- **Note the date of the incoming General Meeting of the Association: October 10th, 2019 (10h15-11h45) in Bern.**

J.-C. Piffaretti, Bea Heim, R. Blankart, S. Leib