Minutes of open VetCAST meeting at ECCMID, Vienna, 24th of April 2017, 5-6.30pm.

Attending: Maureen Mansfield (MM Consult), Damien Bouchard (Anses-ANMV), Annamari Heikinheimo (University of Helsinki), Patricia Ovaert (Ceva-Santé Animale), Alain Bousquet-Melou, Pierre-Louis Toutain, Aude Ferran + Diane Brousseau (Toulouse Vet School), Marianne Melchior (MBM Vet Lab), Ralf Warrass (MSD Animal Health), Bruno Anez (DNA Tech), Cindy Dierickx + Engeline van Duijkeren (National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM)), Jean-Yves Madec (Anses), Jacques Acar (OIE), Johan Mouton (Erasmus MC + EUCAST), Dik Mevius + Kees Veldman (Central Veterinary Institute, Wageningen University), John Turnidge (University of Adelaide + EUCAST), Christian Giske (Karolinska University Hospital and Karolinska Institute + EUCAST), Christine Schwarz, Anno de Jong (Bayer), Peter Damborg + Lisbeth Rem Jessen + Tina Møller Sørensen (University of Copenhagen), Luca Guardabassi (Ross University), Geoffrey Foster, Barry Mather (Pro-Lab Diagnostics), Sakurako Marchand + David Smart + Muhammed Yilmaz (BioMerieux), Mari Matsuda, Nicole Hunter + Samantte Cain (ThermoFisher Scientific), Heike Kaspar + Jürgen Wallmann (Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety), Thomas Fritsche (Marshfield Clinic, CLSI), Marc Struelens (ECDC), Dorina Timofte (University of Liverpool), Zbinden Reinhard (NAC Switzerland), Ludovic Pelligand (Royal Veterinary College), Jordi Torren Edo (EMA).

Introduction to VetCAST

i. Peter Damborg welcomed the attendants and recapped the VetCAST remits, aims and vision.

ii. VetCAST currently consists of 38 members from 14 countries (Denmark, Sweden, Germany, UK, Romania, France, Czech Republic, Croatia, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, and St Kitts & Nevis). The majority of members are veterinary microbiologists, whereas fewer are pharmacologists, or clinicians.

JPIAMR project

i. Dik Mevius explained the 50000 € project granted by the JPIAMR for 2017. In brief, the project is a networking project with money for promotion, workshops, meetings, and publication (no funding of personnel or research). The milestones of the project are:
   a. To write a position paper on clinical breakpoints (CBPs)
   b. To develop a roadmap on how to access, validate and organize MIC, PK, and PD data
   c. To organize a training course on setting CBPs in veterinary medicine
   d. To define at least one tetracycline CBP as a proof-of-principle

Collection of MIC data and setting of ECOFFs

ii. Kees Veldman gave a status of the ongoing collection of MIC data, and examples of MIC distributions and already established ECOFFs;
   a. VetCAST currently has 668 tetracycline MIC distributions (based on almost 270000 observations). Amongst these, there are 448 aggregated distributions
   b. It is a challenge that diagnostic labs test only a limited drug concentration range as this results in truncated MIC distributions
   c. VetCAST has adopted the new EUCAST concept “TECOFFs” (tentative ECOFFs) with less stringent criteria, hence less MIC distributions are needed for setting ECOFFs
   d. Information on how to collect and send data can be provided by Kees upon request. A few hints/comments:
      i. Suppliers should separate data by year, and data must be tested by broth dilution
ii. We have to be pragmatic and accept bacterial identifications provided by labs, even in the period before maldi-tof became widely used in diagnostic labs.

iii. Labs providing MIC data should follow EUCAST criteria for QC. When this is the case, we have to assume that QC criteria were fulfilled.

e. Attendants were encouraged to get in contact with Kees if they have or know of any MIC data that might be useful for VetCAST (kees.veldman@wur.nl)

Collection of PK data

i. Ludovic Pelligand explained how VetCAST will collect, handle, and archive PK data. The following documents have been drafted for standardizing collection of data from (e.g.) the pharmaceutical industry:
   a. An invitation letter explaining which data are requested
   b. A guideline on how VetCAST will collect, archive, handle and analyse PK data
   c. An Excel spreadsheet for data input. The spreadsheet will allow VetCAST to rapidly examine data in order to detect possible errors and outliers

ii. Questions/comments
   a. The invitation letter has not yet been sent out
   b. The excel spreadsheet will be tested with one or two data sets before being sent to industry partners or others with PK data
   c. EUCAST always re-calculates/verifies data analyses supplied by companies. Often EUCAST will not be provided with raw PK data, so instead calculations and interpretations are verified.

iii. Later during the meeting Ludovic explained how VetCAST will work towards the first VetCAST CBP
   a. There are some major challenges, e.g. it is not always clear which companies possess PK data, as there are several producers of drugs like tetracycline
   b. In order to simplify the process of making CBPs, susceptibility testing of variants of tetracycline (chlortetracycline, oxytetracycline etc) will be considered together initially
   c. VetCAST members will be invited to actively contribute to PK data collection

Position paper on how VetCAST will define breakpoints

i. Pierre-Louis Toutain explained the process of writing the position paper on how VetCAST will establish clinical breakpoints (CBPs) in veterinary medicine. The current (4th) draft of the paper has been sent for revision by EUCAST, and EUCAST representatives promised they will reply with input within one month

ii. It was emphasized by VetCAST that the position paper has high priority as (i) it forms the basis for VetCAST to set CBPs, and (ii) EMA will continue formulating its official working relation to VetCAST once the paper is ready

iii. Jordi Torren Edo (EMA) agreed to forward the next version of the paper to the Committee for Medicinal Products for Veterinary Use (CVMP)

Workshop: “Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (AST) with VETCAST breakpoints: quantitative methods”

i. Pierre-Louis Toutain introduced this workshop scheduled for September 12-15 this year in Toulouse, France. Overall programme:
   a. Day 1: General introduction to VetCAST, AST, and breakpoints
b. Days 2-4: modeling approach for setting CBPs

ii. The course is financed by the JPIAMR grant and a sponsorship from bioMeriéux. Apart from these contributions, participants will have to pay relatively small fees for participation and accommodation.

iii. Several world-leading experts will talk at the workshop, including CLSI and EUCAST representatives.

iv. Link to the workshop (registration is now open): [https://workshop.inra.fr/vetcast17](https://workshop.inra.fr/vetcast17)

Conflicts of interest (COI) policy

i. Dik Mevius presented the current draft for a COI policy. The draft is based on – and similar to - the current EUCAST policy.

   a. The draft was recently sent to the EUCAST Steering Committee for input
   
   b. Later, the document will be forwarded to EMA. Jordi Torren Edo (EMA) will then discuss the document with EMA lawyers before getting back with comments
   
   c. Suggestion from Anno de Jong: we should consider adding microbiologists and clinicians to the statements in the 1st paragraph

Future funding of VetCAST

i. Peter Damborg updated on current and future funding of VetCAST

   a. Apart from the JPIAMR project, some small nationally-funded projects on CBPs in goats/sheep and mink are running
   
   b. Major sustainable funding (e.g. from EU agencies like EMA) is not available at this stage
   
   c. A grant application involving research on ECOFFs was recently submitted
   
   d. A COST-Action research application is planned for the next deadline in September

/Peter Damborg