

# European Committee on Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (EUCAST)

## Minutes of the **General Committee Meeting** on 17 April 2023 at the European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases, Copenhagen, Denmark

The Chair of EUCAST, Professor Christian Giske, opened the meeting at 09.30.

### 1. Apologies

There were no official apologies.

### 2. Minutes of meeting for 2022

The minutes were reviewed. There were no amendments, and they were duly ratified.

### 3. EUCAST General Committee membership

The Chair asked the attendees to notify the EUCAST webmaster, Gunnar Kahlmeter, if there had been any changes in National AST Committee chairs.

### 4. EUCAST Steering Committee membership

The previous General Committee members have completed their terms (Gian Maria Rossolini from Italy and Jorge Sampaio from Brazil) and two new General Committee members have been appointed to the Steering Committee: Anouk Muller from The Netherlands and Barbara Holzknacht from Denmark. The Chair thanked Drs Rossolini and Sampaio for their valuable contributions.

Up to two additional “visiting” General Committee members may attend each Steering Committee meeting by prior agreement. Details are on the EUCAST website.

### 5. EUCAST Chair’s report

Christian Giske (CG) summarised activities over the past year. Implementation of EUCAST breakpoints and guidelines continues to grow in Europe and internationally. More than 70% of European countries now have >50% guideline implementation.

In addition to the Steering Committee, there are now three standing subcommittees, for fungi, veterinary pathogens and mycobacteria, and five active ad hoc subcommittees on Expected Phenotypes and Expert Rules, MIC Distributions and ECOFFs, Disk Mass Development (in conjunction with CLSI), the Relationship Between WGS and Phenotype, and Anaerobe AST.

National AST Committees (NACs) are now established in all European countries except Bulgaria, Belarus, Georgia and Armenia. In addition, there are NACs in 11 countries outside Europe.

CG noted the five finalised consultations on breakpoints in 2022 which were included in Breakpoint

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**Tables 13.0**

- Fosfomycin IV – a large amount of data and feedback from consultation was considered. Breakpoints were set for fosfomycin IV when used alone. The use of fosfomycin in combination therapy is not discouraged, but there are currently no data to indicate a relationship between MIC and outcome when it is used in combination therapy.
- Chloramphenicol in meningitis
- Breakpoints for *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* and *C. ulcerans*
- Dosing of cephalosporins in *Staphylococcus aureus* infections
- Revision of aminopenicillin breakpoints for *Enterobacterales*

He also indicated that there were 6 upcoming consultations in 2023

- Breakpoints for anaerobes – additional antimicrobial agents
- Viridans group streptococci – breakpoints and MIC-ZD correlates
- Adaptation of the breakpoint tables requirements in endocarditis
- *Nocardia* spp. – breakpoints and methods
- EUCAST dosing tab adapted for paediatric use
- Cefiderocol susceptibility testing

## **6. Subcommittee on Antifungal Susceptibility Testing (AFST)**

Maiken Arendrup (AFST Chair) presented an update on the organisation and activities of the AFST. She highlighted a number of activities including ongoing work with methods and quality control:

- Azole resistance screening in *A. fumigatus* (E.Def 10.2)
- Molecular detection of resistance
- Rezafungin testing with a modified E.Def 7 method
- Update of the QC table (version 6.0 valid from 4 May 2022). QC for rezafungin MIC targets ongoing, in preparation for version 7.0

Methods in development include

- Echinocandin susceptibility testing of *Aspergillus*
- Terbinafine & itraconazole agar screening of *Trichophyton*

Ongoing tasks include

- Rezafungin rational document (RD) development
- Reviewing and updating the RDs based upon new MIC distributions
- ECOFFs for *Candida auris*
- A number of upcoming agents
- Drug-bug combinations in which there is insufficient evidence (IE) for setting breakpoints
- Warning on VipCheck azole screening agars

The AFST has five papers in the previous 12 months.

## **7. Subcommittee on Veterinary Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (VetCAST)**

Peter Damborg, the Chair VetCAST, gave a brief overview of the activities of VetCAST. VetCAST has 54 members from 14 countries, and a steering committee of 8 people. Prior to this, he acknowledged the wonderful past contribution to VetCAST of Dik Mevius who had passed away in the previous 12 months.

The Subcommittee conducted or been involved with a range of meetings and continued to collect data for the development of breakpoints and rationale documents.

Prioritised clinical breakpoints and accompanying RDs include:

- Florfenicol for cattle
- Amoxicillin±clavulanic acid in dogs

- Procaine penicillin and penethamate in horses
- Doxycycline in pigs
- Oxytetracycline in cattle

A formal Breakpoint table is now in development. Disk diffusion breakpoints are considered mandatory for veterinary testing and studies are underway and need to be completed before the first Breakpoint table can be released. A follow-up table of ECOFFs and TECOFFs is planned, for use in AMR surveillance primarily (possibly in collaboration with EARS-Vet), but also for clinical breakpoint development and in situations where a PK-PD cutoff has not been developed (possibly in collaboration with ENOVAT).

Two training schools were held in the previous 12 months.

## 8. Subcommittee on Antimycobacterial Susceptibility Testing (AMST)

Emmanuelle Cambau (EC, Subcommittee Chair) presented the activities of AMST. A laboratory network has been established across 11 European countries.

Ongoing work includes:

- MIC Reference protocol for DMSO-dissolved agents
  - Preliminary results for edaquiline, delamanid, pretomanid, clofazimine were shown
- Calibration study (BD, Janssen, ThermoFisher)
- MIC Reference protocol for non-tuberculous mycobacteria (NTM)
- Development of a reference panel of European strains
  - Including reference strains, agents to test

AMST is in the process of recruiting laboratories to develop a network as is done for other subcommittees. There are currently 14 laboratories in the network.

## 9. EUCAST Subcommittee on MIC Distributions and ECOFFs

Gunnar Kahlmeter spoke to the progress that this Subcommittee. The website has been rebuilt with improved visualisation. Work is continuing on reviewing all distributions and revising ECOFFs according to the new version SOP 10.2 which uses a new method of estimation and includes a confidence interval.

## 10. EUCAST Development Laboratory (EDL) Report

Erika Matuschek outlined the wide range of activities currently being undertaken in the EDL

- New in Breakpoint tables v 13.0
  - Revised zone diameter breakpoints related to changes in MIC breakpoints
    - Updated aminopenicillin breakpoints for *Enterobacterales*
    - Additional meningitis breakpoints
    - Removal of several I category breakpoints
  - Comments for “screening tests” further harmonised as a result of removal of I category breakpoints
  - New breakpoints for *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* and *C. ulcerans*
    - Collaboration with Institut Pasteur (France) and the Bavarian Food and Health Authority (Germany)
- Development of a screening breakpoint for ciprofloxacin for use with meningitis isolates
- Additional changes/updates in EUCAST tables during 2023
  - Additional QC ranges for *S. aureus* ATCC 29213 and *S. pneumoniae* ATCC 49619 – collaboration with VetCAST (EUCAST QC Tables v 13.1)
  - MIC and zone diameter breakpoints for anaerobic bacteria and additional agents (to be published 2023)

- RAST breakpoints for additional agents for *E. coli*, *K. pneumoniae* and *P. aeruginosa* (to be published 2023)
- CLSI-EUCAST Joint Working Group
  - Ongoing work for new agents according to the published disk potency SOP (EUCAST SOP 11.0, CLSI M23S)
    - Disk potency studies for 7 new antimicrobial agents
    - Feedback and decision in real time by sub-groups within the CLSI-EUCAST joint working group, each with 2 CLSI members and 2 EUCAST members
  - New SOP developed and approved by CLSI and EUCAST
    - Evaluation of media from different manufacturers with the aim to detect possible media-related differences early in the process
    - Recommended to be performed after selecting the disk content (potency) and before performing a QC study
- On-going work at EDL
  - Investigation of alternative media for disk diffusion of fastidious organisms
  - Development of a disk diffusion method for *N. gonorrhoeae*
  - Investigation of alternative disks for determining the benzylpenicillin susceptibility in *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (to avoid the frequent need for MIC testing)
  - Evaluation of AST methods for cefiderocol (reference BMD, disk diffusion and commercially available) Strains with defined susceptibility are now available from the Culture Collection of Gothenburg University: *S. pneumoniae* and *P. aeruginosa*
- Other ongoing activities
  - Developing EUCAST breakpoint table v 14.0 (1 January 2024)
  - Developing disk content/potency for novel agents (in collaboration with CLSI)
  - Developing disk diffusion criteria for novel agents as part of the breakpoint setting process
  - MIC and disk diffusion distributions for *Brucella melitensis*
  - MIC and disk diffusion methodology for *Bacillus anthracis*
  - Extended range of agents for rapidly growing anaerobes (*Bacteroides* spp, *Prevotella* spp, *Fusobacterium necrophorum*, *Clostridium perfringens*, *Cutibacterium acnes*)
  - Assessment and publication of two laboratory field trials on disk diffusion of anaerobic bacteria (17 international clinical laboratories)
  - Cefiderocol susceptibility testing methodology – trouble shooting
  - Disk diffusion methodology and criteria – *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*
  - Developing an alternative medium (to MHF) for fastidious bacteria
  - Educational efforts and ESCMID observerships

The have been four publications from EDL in the last 12 months

## 11. EUCAST websites

Gunnar Kahlmeter noted that the website continues to expand and has a high hit rate both within and outside Europe now.

## 15. Future Activities

The Chair described the EUCAST future activities in his report. He also suggested that future meetings should probably be scheduled for 90 minutes in future, rather than the current 60 minutes.

## 15. Any Other Business

None was raised.

## 16. Next meeting of the EUCAST General Committee

Scheduled to be held during the 2023 ECCMID, Barcelona, Spain, 27-30 April 2024.