

# UK Respiratory Research Strategy Committee

## Moving Forward

Building on the successful workshops in October 2005 at the Royal College of Physicians, and in February 2006 at Asthma UK, a meeting of the UK Respiratory Research Strategy Committee met on 14th July 2006 at BTS Head Office. Under the Chairmanship of Professor Stephen Holgate, representatives from professional, charitable and educational respiratory organisations came together to discuss how best to take forward the research agenda, building on the superb work carried out by the prioritisation exercise undertaken during the workshop process.

After seeking the approval of all present to act as Chair of the Committee until such time as the Committee structure was formalised, Professor Holgate was keen to emphasise the importance of the inclusive and empowering nature of the Committee. However, those present were unanimous in supporting Professor Holgate to act as Chair for an initial three year term.

Some slight modifications were made to the Terms of Reference to include reference to the promotion of "world class" respiratory research, and with the addition of two points that state the need to facilitate translation research in respiratory medicine, and to promote conditions in which more research can take place in the NHS. The full Terms of Reference are noted overleaf.

The Committee quickly identified the need to draw up a paper on a collaborative working approach for all professional groups, at the same time as recognising the need to include key players from industry, who prioritise the aims of and objectives of the research agenda, beyond the aims of industry. The Committee also agreed to work together on a data collection exercise that aimed to identify all research carried out in a career development capacity, such as clinical fellowships, PhDs and post-doctoral fellowships, that were funded by charity. Whilst being mindful of the need to include data from Wales and Scotland, this two year snapshot of information would play an important part in highlighting the deficit in respiratory research.

The excellent paper prepared on Research Prioritisation following the February workshop played a key role in defining the communications approach that needs to be taken. Many thanks to Ian Jarrold from BLF for pulling the Report together, and to the Chairs of groups who wrote each section: Kim Harrison, John Price, Peter Openshaw, Neil Thomson, Martyn Patridge, Tak Lee and Peter Calverley. Representatives from BTS, BLF and Asthma UK will work together to take this forward. An approach will be made to Thorax where it is hoped that they will publish an editorial on the subject in the November issue, timed to coincide with the formal launch of the Committee at the BTS Winter Meeting. The journals of other respiratory professional groups will also be approached.

The good news of the capacity building PhD studentships, jointly funded by MRC, Asthma UK, BLF and BTS/Morrison Davies Trust was well received - a vital step in raising the profile of Respiratory Research whilst dovetailing with the capacity building aims of the Committee. Reporting of the new round of national academic awards, lectureships and "Walport" posts was also well received, but we noted that funding for consumables used was not included. It is hoped that with the support of the charities, this issue can be overcome and to this end, our charity partners have agreed to meet to discuss the matter.

Finally, participants please note in your diary the date for the next meeting - October 25th at 9.30am, at BTS HQ.

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Professor Stephen Holgate



## Terms of Reference

Building on work already achieved the Committee will:

- Produce and update a strategy for respiratory research in consultation with constituent groups and others
- Promote the need for world class research into respiratory disease
- Facilitate translational research in respiratory medicine
- Continue working to raise the profile of respiratory research in the UK
- Raise awareness of the need for a good career structure for respiratory researchers
- Promote conditions in which more research can take place in NHS settings.
- Work to increase the funding for respiratory research in the UK
- Raise awareness of the amount that has been achieved by the respiratory research community
- Liaise with UK agencies and funders - DoH, MRC, Wellcome Trust and so on - to share information, respond to consultations where an united response would be helpful, and to work jointly towards the share aim of improved patient care. Such liaise to be effected in 2 ways - direct involvement in meetings, and open lines of communication meantime

## Committee email Contacts

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### Diary Dates

The date of the next meeting has been agreed for:

**Wednesday 25th October 2006  
at 9.30am**

Dates for meetings in 2007 are:

- Friday 26th January
- Friday 22nd June
- Friday 21st September

all at 9.30am  
All at BTS HQ