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STANDARDIZATION IN BLOOD RHEOLOGY

Guidelines for Clinical Trials and Laboratory Methodology

BACKGROUND

In a rapidly developing field such as blood rheology, there is a need for guidelines on methodology for both clinical trials and laboratory procedures. Guidelines are particularly important in ensuring that a high scientific standard is applied uniformly.

Since 1985, responsibility for producing guidelines was accepted by the Expert Panel on Blood Rheology (chairman Professor John Stuart) of the International Council for Standardization in Haematology. This panel has now disbanded as Professor Stuart has retired from his post at The University of Birmingham. Publications of that panel included:

1. Guidelines for measurement of blood viscosity and erythrocyte deformability. *Clinical Hemorheology*, **6**, 439-453, 1986.
2. Guidelines on selection of laboratory tests for monitoring the acute phase response. *Journal of Clinical Pathology*, **41**, 1203-1212, 1988.
3. ICSH recommendations for measurement of erythrocyte sedimentation rate. *Journal of Clinical Pathology*, **46**, 198-203, 1993.

NEW ARRANGEMENTS

The recent formation of the International Society for Clinical Haemorheology (ISCH) has allowed new arrangements to be made to ensure that such work on standardization continues and develops. The Executive Committee of the ISCH has invited Professor Stuart to act as Chairman of a "Consensus Meeting on Rheological Methodology" to be held as part of the 2nd International Congress on Clinical Haemorheology in Big Sky, Montana, USA during July 23-28, 1995. As blood rheology has expanded, there is now a need for more than one panel and four new chairmen have been invited and agreed to lead the following specialist panels.

1. Acute-phase response - Dr Michael W Rampling
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2. Clinical trials - Dr Wolfgang Koenig
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3. Red cell rheology - Dr Max R Hardeman
Academic Medical Centre,
Department of Internal Medicine,
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4. White cell rheology - Professor Jean-Luc Wautier
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FUTURE PLANS

The work of the new chairmen will start with the Consensus Meeting in Big Sky. Professor Stuart will chair the symposium and the four new chairmen will present an outline of the key areas that require the attention of each panel. Following this symposium, which will include a round-table discussion to obtain feedback from rheologists, the four chairmen will invite colleagues to form the new panels. Rheologists with an interest in the work of these panels are now invited to contact the relevant chairman who will welcome suggestions as to key areas for future work.

Executive Committee of the International Society for Clinical Haemorheology