Minutes of the ISPD Lab Techniques SIG  
(non invasive, cytogenetics, molecular, arrays, PGD)

ISPD 14th International Conference, Vancouver, Canada  
4 June 2008

We had an excellent turn out for the first meeting of the Lab Techniques special interest group (SIG).

Everyone put their name and email address on a sign-in list but it was requested that we add speciality to this list so we know everyone’s field.

1. **Mission statement**
   We had a brainstorming session on the SIG’s mission and various ideas came forward including the following:
   - Raise level of awareness of lab techniques in PND Validation of techniques
   - Guidelines for the various techniques
   - Consensus of the use of techniques
   - Communication between specialities
   - Trouble shooting
   - International data
   - Education
   - Large scale comparison studies
   - Database of genomic mutations that are clinically relevant
   - Registration of ongoing clinical trials
   - Funding

2. **Education and training**
   Regional and subject-specific training was discussed.
   - Every region could have its own meeting between the ISPD meetings.
   - Podcasts of training could be posted on the ISPD website.
   - The SIG could have lab techniques training for clinicians and vice versa.
   - Basic training courses in lab techniques.
   - After the meeting two people from China offered to host a basic training course in China – Tao Duan and Jiong Tao.

3. **Preconference course 2010**
   The workshops held in Vancouver were a very good start. It was agreed that they should be called *courses* rather than *workshops*. Instructions shall be given to speakers regarding slides, uniform handouts, biographies, starting with the basics, etc.

   Various options were discussed including non invasive prenatal diagnosis and methods and application of molecular karyotyping.

   It was agreed that the SIG shall recommend a 2010 preconference course in non invasive PND. Lyn Chitty agreed to lead this effort.

   It was suggested that we could hold an ISPD SIG course tagged onto another meeting in the years ISPD does not have a conference. This was agreed to be an excellent suggestion. The ESHG and the ASHG were discussed. This needs to be
explored for 2009. The 2009 course could be in methods and application of molecular karyotyping.

4. Data collection and implementation

It was agreed that an annual report on indications, how samples are taken, all single genes, etc. would be useful. Some countries have national data collections. It might be useful to collate the national data. An email can be sent to all ISPD members to see who has a national system and who the contact is.

The UK, Spain, Italy, Netherlands, France, Hong Kong have data collections but not USA or Canada.

5. Guidelines

What indications doing PND for? What techniques are being used?

6. Newsletter and website

Joyce Harper agreed to set up the SIG website. It was agreed a newsletter would be a good idea and could include a summary of the lab aspects of the ISPD meeting. David Chitayat agreed to help Joyce with the newsletter.

It was also discussed that we should advertise on other websites and newsletters such as the Downs syndrome – to discuss with Howard Cuckle.

An open forum on the ISPD website was suggested.

It was suggested that it would be useful to have a summary of reviews and papers in the field. These could be listed on the website.

7. Other

It was discussed that this SIG should not just be a group for scientists but that clinicians want to know about lab techniques. The courses should be aimed at both scientists and clinicians and so should start with the basics. Counselling and consent should also be discussed.

A questionnaire to all members regarding their practices was discussed. We need to take some time to develop this so we do not miss anything. McGee offered to lead on this.

ACTION POINTS

1. Elect a chair and deputy to run the SIG
2. Set up a course for 2009 – ESHG or ASHG on methods of molecular karyotyping. Identify a course organiser.
3. Create a proposal for a preconference course for 2010 – Lyn Chitty – Non invasive PND
4. Email all centres to ask who is collecting national data and the contact
5. Prepare questionnaire – McGee to lead
6. Set up website and newsletter – Joyce Harper and David Chitayat
7. Basic training course in China - Tao Duan and Jiong Tao

FUTURE ACTIONS

1. Mission Statement
2. Guidelines

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Harper