

The **RESCEU 2nd General Assembly** has just ended, leaving participants with plenty of impressions and inspiration for the work ahead for the project in the next future.

The meeting, which took place at St Anne's college, Oxford, on 20-21-22 June, brought together about **100 participants** from the 18 project's partners and representatives from all the work packages. Affiliated Partners representatives, RESCEU Advisory Boards members and other relevant stakeholders, such as the World Health Organization, were also invited to attend and provide their perspective on the project.



Group photo of participants to the General Assembly Meeting

The meeting was intended to provide a space for a face to face interaction to participants involved in all work packages that is essential to ensure coordination amongst partner organisations across a very large and multidisciplinary project team such as in RESCEU.

For this reason, a full day on June 20 has been devoted to **WP pre-meetings**, where first results and outputs from each WP were shared (such as preliminary data from clinical studies), progress was assessed and plans and goals for the near future were discussed. The pre-meetings also included joint sessions to discuss transversal topics that emerged from different WPs during the first year and a half of RESCEU, such as the session on RSV and asthma bringing together WP1, WP2, WP3 and WP4. During this session participants addressed themes such as the existing gaps in knowledge and on how to align current efforts amongst WPs.

The first day started with a keynote speech from **Dr. Pasi Penttinen**, representing the **European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)** as member of the RESCEU International Scientific Advisory Group (ISAG). The speech, entitled *Surveillance of respiratory viruses at EU level. Perspective from ECDC*, provided insights on the state of RSV Surveillance on European scale and potential future options.

The speech was followed by a focus on **RESCEU interaction with regulators** by **Francesca Rocchi**, from PENTA Foundation, who presented the progress in the establishment of collaboration with the European Medicine Agency (EMA) during the first 18 months of RESCEU, while updating the audience on the main outcomes of the EMA Innovation Task Force Briefing Meeting, held in March 16th 2018 at the EMA premises with RESCEU representatives from all WPs. Ting Shi and Nienke Scheltema, young researchers from the University of Edinburgh and University Medical Centre of Utrecht respectively, were then invited to give two **lectures on RSV burden of disease and recent developments**.

The focus during this day was the WPs' presentations providing a state of play and highlights on WPs' progress, achievements and upcoming work for the near future. Submitted and upcoming deliverables, achieved milestones, and progress in clinical studies' recruitment were among the focuses of the WP presentations. The quality of presentations and the follow-on discussions were outstanding and it was heartening that most WP presentations were led by Early Career Researchers, that have been deeply involved in all the activities throughout the meeting.



Harish Nair, University of Edinburgh, presenting WP1- Systematic literature review on RSV and current estimates of burden of disease

This day provided a chance for a face to face discussions within and across WPs, for presenting the work done and develop plans for the future, while also providing the stage for brainstorming sessions and networking among participants. It was encouraging to see the progress made in all Work Packages, and the degree of coordination amongst partner organisations across a very large and multi-disciplinary project team.

Several **posters** were displayed on the work done in different WPs both during the first and the second day of the meeting. The attendees could interact with the authors, young researchers from partner and affiliated partner's organisations, during the lunch breaks.

In the evening, a **Consortium Dinner** was organized at Balliol College, one of Oxford's oldest college (founded in 1263). During the dinner Dr. Andrew Pollard, Professor of Paediatric Infection and Immunity at the University of Oxford, Director of the Oxford Vaccine Group and co-lead of WP5 *Presumed risk factors and biomarkers for RSV-related severe disease and related sequelae*, gave a speech about the challenges of **translating research into vaccine policy**, making the point on the importance as scientist to recognize decision makers beyond scientific audience and on the perilous consequences for the scientific community of ignoring broader audiences.



Andrew Pollard addressing the audience during the Consortium Dinner

The second day focused on more transversal aspects, with the project management presentation, an interactive session with the three members of the Patient Advisory Board, stressing the importance of generating awareness on what RSV is, and an open discussion on outreach and dissemination, which is becoming more and more important as the project evolves and the first results are available and need to be shared with a broader audience.

The session on **PAB engagement** was particularly interactive and a chance for the two new members of the board, Harriett Ruck-Keene (UK) and Katja Niilo-Rämä (FI), to

introduce themselves to the Consortium. Their commitment to raise some important points with regard to patient and public engagement was highly appreciated, as well as their efforts to develop an RSV Patient Network, which RESCEU is willing to support in the next future.



Patient Advisory Board presenting plans to expand and set up RSV Patient Network within the next year.

Also a number of representatives of the other **advisory bodies** in RESCEU, the International Scientific Advisory Group (ISAG) and the Ethic Advisory Committee (EAC) participated to the assembly and were invited to interact and provide their inputs, with a specific session for their feedback at the end of the second day. Their suggestions will be taken on-board and plans will be developed to action them in the project cycle.

During the last day **Dr. Siddhivinayak Hirve** from WHO also updated the audience on WHO Global RSV Surveillance, an initiative that is of highly relevance for RESCEU.

Overall, the General Assembly was an energising gathering which proved the good work done so far and the commitment of all project participants, Affiliated Partners and advisors.

The next RESCEU General Assembly Meeting, will take place on **19-20-21 June 2019** in **Utrecht**, hosted by the University Medical Centre Utrecht, RESCEU partner and Co-lead of WP4 on Prospective data collection.



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