

# EAPCCT *News*

*The Newsletter of the European Association of Poisons Centres  
and Clinical Toxicologists*



**April 2010**

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Dear EAPCCT members,  
dear colleagues from other toxicological societies

I would like to welcome all those of you planning to attend the upcoming XXX EAPCCT Congress which will take place in Bordeaux, Southern France. You can look forward to a meeting with an interesting and breath-taking programme. Please go to our website [www.eapcct.org](http://www.eapcct.org) for further details.

There will again be a General Assembly during the Bordeaux Congress. All members have received the agenda and are warmly invited to attend. It is particularly important this year as a new Board will be elected, and the Association needs your careful choice. I am particularly delighted that we have found a number of extremely valuable candidates for all positions. In addition, the members will have to decide upon changes to the Constitution which will allow online voting in the future - important for all those who are not able to attend the General Assembly. You will find information material on both topics on the restricted part of our website.

In order to respond to a variety of topics in the European legislation which concern the activities of Poisons Centres, the Board has reactivated the working Group on Poisons Centres Activities, now as the Working Group on European Regulatory Issues, chaired by the Board member, Herbert Desel. The group is now involved in discussions with the European Commission about the Cosmetic Products Notification Portal (CPNP), and product notification under the EC Regulation 1272/2008 on Classification, labelling and Packaging of substances and mixtures ("CLP-Regulation"). The group has on its radar other issues such as REACH, biocides, and the Rapid Alerting System for Chemical Incidents within the ASHT project (see page 2). The group has 18 members representing all European regions and will have a first plenary meeting in May in Bordeaux. These activities are of major importance as they increase the visibility of Poisons Centres, clinical toxicologists and the EAPCCT as partners for European authorities, when most regulatory issues move from their national to the European level.

And last but not least, our Journal *Clinical Toxicology* has had a new editorial structure for more than a year now. It is appearing now in 10 issues and has improved in many other ways, so that more than ever it is the perfect platform to publish your science.

H. Kupferschmidt,  
EAPCCT President



## XXX EAPCCT International Congress 11-14 May 2010 Bordeaux, France



### Plenary lectures:

**Saurat JH** Dioxin Poisoning: the Victor Yushchenko Case

**Hinson JA** Paracetamol - Update on Mechanisms of Toxicity

**Daniels AM** Fact and Fiction in Opiate Withdrawal

### Louis Roche Lecture:

**Dawson A** An accidental toxicologist in public health

**Pre-congress symposium** in the series Continuing Education in Clinical Toxicology, *Investigation of the Poisoned Patient* - Tuesday 11 May 2010

### Main Congress themes:

*Critical Care*

*Management of Drug and Alcohol*

*Withdrawal*

*Paracetamol toxicology - What's New?*

*Optimising Research in Poisons Centres*

*Preparedness for Unusual Toxic Outbreaks*

*Toxic Alcohols*



## The Alerting System for Chemical Health Threats - Phase II (ASHTII): An update

# ASHT!

### Authors:

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### Introduction

Due to growing public and government concern about the possible deliberate use of toxic chemical agents with malicious intent, European Member States (MS) agreed on the need for a mechanism or system to facilitate the rapid identification and efficient communication

of information regarding chemical health threats.

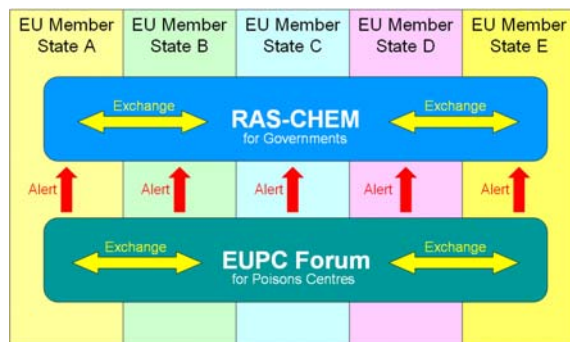
To support EU MS emergency preparedness the ASHTII project aims to improve the speed and effectiveness of the detection, risk assessment, evaluation, risk management and public health response for acute (and potentially chronic) exposures (accidental or deliberate) to toxic chemical agents by further developing the Rapid Alert System for Chemical Health Threats (RAS-CHEM). RAS-CHEM will be used by EU MS National Public Health Officials to alert and communicate validated information on emerging and ongoing chemical health threats to other MS authorities (and the EU Commission). A second tier parallel to RAS-CHEM termed the EUPC Forum will be used by EU Poisons Centres to communicate information to other EU Poisons centres and National Public Health Officials.

For both components of the alerting system to interoperate successfully, it is important that the EUPC Forum and RAS-CHEM can accurately describe the wide spectrum of clinical effects associated with exposure to toxic chemical agents and accurately describe features of poisoning in a manner that is understandable throughout the EU.

#### **Project Progress:**

RAS-CHEM has been further developed and extensively tested in ASHTII and will be a mirror of the EUPC-forum. The main difference between the systems is the access privileges and the types

information or alerts that will be hosted on the systems. RAS-CHEM is reserved for use by national public health authorities and health ministries to communicate information on validated chemical threats that may have a potential public health impact (either nationally or internationally). The EUPC Forum will enable EU Poison Centres to communicate information about individual cases (e.g. symptoms, exposure route, chemical agent either suspected or confirmed to be involved).



**Figure 1: Overview of RAS-CHEM and EUPC Forum reporting process**

Following an extensive evaluation of available medical terminology reference systems, the internationally standardised Medical Dictionary for Regulatory Activities (MedDRA) has been recommended for inclusion in EUPC Forum and RAS-CHEM.

The incorporation of a standardised terminology system will allow multiple users throughout Europe to enter clinical effects verbatim, and enable RAS-CHEM and the EUPC Forum to connect the terms to allow patterns or clusters of clinical effects to be seen and identified, which

is a fundamental requirement of any alerting system. Equally a system that can map and exchange information with existing and future public health care services and environment agencies will ensure maximum responsiveness and effectiveness in the detection, risk assessment, evaluation, risk management and public health response to accidental and deliberate chemical exposures or release.

From Mid 2010 RAS-CHEM will undergo an extensive testing phase that will be run by the European Commission in close collaboration with the ASHTII project team. Member States are EEA Countries are invited to participate in RAS-CHEM testing. Following this extensive 6 month test period and consultation, the revised version of RAS-CHEM is expected to go live in the beginning of 2011.

EU exercises are planned to evaluate RAS-CHEM from winter 2010/spring 2011 and will provide opportunity to engage additional key stakeholders and Member State Authorities.

### **ASHTII Workshop, Goettingen, Germany, October 2009**



**Left rear:** Al Bronstein, Stacey Wyke, Hugo Kupferschmidt, Herbert Desel, Kevin Manley, Gabija Dragelyte, Nick Edwards  
**Left front:** Rob Orford, Raquel Daurte-Davidson, Alison Good, Daniela Pelclova, Monique Mathieu-Nolf, Andreas Schaper

The mechanisms that currently exist for reporting and sharing information on chemical health threats between EU MSs are poorly defined. It is envisaged that RAS-CHEM and EUPC forum will facilitate efficient communication between European Poison Centres, National Public Health Authorities and Health Ministries. Improved speed and effectiveness for the detection, risk assessment, evaluation and risk management of accidental and deliberate (i.e. with malicious intent) exposures to toxic chemical agents and potential public health threats will reduce the risk of exposure to toxic chemical agents throughout the EU.

## Acknowledgements

Desel H<sup>1</sup>, Schaper A<sup>1</sup>, Pelclova D<sup>2</sup>,  
Mathieu-Nolf M<sup>3</sup>, Edwards N<sup>4</sup>, Kennedy  
K<sup>4</sup>, Sutton N<sup>4</sup>, Maeve McParland<sup>4</sup>, Zoe  
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2. General Faculty Hospital, Prague, Czech Republic.
3. Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Lille, France.
4. Medical Toxicology Unit, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, London, UK.

5. Health Emergency Situations Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania.
6. National Poisons Information Service, Edinburgh, UK.
7. Swiss Toxicological Information Centre, Zurich, Switzerland.
8. European Association of Poison Centres and Clinical Toxicologists (EAPCCT).

Please contact the group if you require further information or would like to be involved in testing the systems; email us at [ASHT@HPA.org.uk](mailto:ASHT@HPA.org.uk) or visit our website [www.HPA.org.uk/ASHTII](http://www.HPA.org.uk/ASHTII).



## Elections to the EAPCCT Board in Bordeaux 2010

Elections to the EAPCCT Board will take place in Bordeaux in 2010. Members who are not attending can vote in advance of the meeting and the Past President will cast their votes for them.

All members should have received information on the candidates and it can be found on the website [www.eapcct.org](http://www.eapcct.org). If you are not attending in Bordeaux please let Prof Hantson have your proxy votes by 5 May to be included.

Note that only those who have paid their EAPCCT registration fee for 2010 are entitled to vote.

## Report from the Board meeting held at the Hotel Pullman Aquitaine, in Bordeaux on 6 February 2010

The Executive of the Board reviewed the Congress facilities in Bordeaux and checked arrangements on Friday afternoon.

At the Board meeting on Saturday the following were discussed:

- Arrangements for the Congress in Bordeaux
- Contracts for the congresses in Dubrovnik in 2011 and London in 2012
- The webmaster, Dr Kupferschmidt, displayed designs for the new style website and it was agreed to commission it.

Note that these are from the draft minutes which will not be finalised until the next Board meeting in May



The XXXI EAPCCT Congress will take place at Valamar Lacroma Resort, Conference & Spa\*\*\*\*Dubrovnik, Croatia 24-27 May 2011.

25 October 2010 - Abstract submission opens

17 November 2010 12 midnight) - Deadline for receipt of abstracts

**The EAPCCT welcomes the following new members:**

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\* Thanks to Joanna Tempowski and WHO/IPCS for sponsoring members

## Forthcoming Congresses and Meetings

**IUTOX 2010:** Barcelona, Spain, July 19-23,  
2010. <http://www.iutox.org/>

**University of Adelaide Clinical Toxicology  
Short Course 2010:** Women's and Children's  
Hospital, Adelaide, Australia, March 2-7,  
2010.

**North American Congress of Clinical  
Toxicology October 7-12, 2010,** Denver, CO.  
<http://www.clintox.org/>

**48e Congrès de la Société de Toxicologie  
Clinique:**

Marseille, France, May 3-4, 2010. See also  
<http://www.toxicologie-clinique.org/> for more  
information

**9th International ISSX Scientific Meeting:**  
Istanbul, Turkey, September 4-8, 2010  
See also the  
<http://www.issx.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1> for more information.

## **Contributions to the Newsletter**

Important news or information for other members of the EAPCCT is always welcome. Your contribution to the Newsletter should preferably not exceed 500 words and be sent to the EAPCCT Secretariat:

**Alison Good, General Secretary**  
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