

## **Scientific report: *COST Action IS1002* – Management Committee meeting and meeting of Working Groups 1,2, 3 and 4 meeting 6 April 2011, Amsterdam**

The meeting took place at the Netherlands Center for Occupational Diseases, part of Coronel Institute in the AMC and University of Amsterdam in Amsterdam. The Local Organizer was Annet Lenderink, physician –researcher at the Netherlands Center for Occupational Diseases, substitute MC member and member of WG 4. The topic of the meeting was presentation of the contribution of each participating country to Modernet (a network for development of new techniques for discovering trends in occupational and work-related diseases and tracing new and emerging risks). A call for presentations on contributions was sent out in March 2011. All countries participating in the meeting gave short presentations on their ideas about contribution to the Modernet network: Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Romania, Spain, UK, Australia, Ireland, and the Netherlands.

After that the Relationship between COST Action and Modernet was shortly discussed. Modernet is a network of collaborating centres doing research on occupational diseases, which existed already before the COST Action. The Modernet network has taken the initiative for the COST Action. So, the COST Action is an activity of the Modernet network (besides other activities), in which also other parties can participate. The Modernet network and the COST Action have a considerable overlap.

The MC is in favour of planning of an MC meeting and WG meetings together again. The MC agreed on Manchester as the location of the next meeting. Raymond Agius will be the contact person and organizer for the next meeting.

In the afternoon each of the four Working Groups in the Action had their first meeting to discuss their work plans:

**WG 1: Improvement of quality of data collection** in occupational diseases (Dick Spreeuwers)

After discussion it was decided that the WG will make an inventory of the experience, the available data and the needs on this topic amongst the participants of the Action

**WG 2: Application of new techniques and methods for analysis of trends** in occupational diseases (Raymond Agius). WG2 discussed the four goals of the WG2: 1] Consensus on best practice for establishing true change in population risk over time, 2] Extend the trend analyses performed in the UK to other member countries, 3] Consensus on the most appropriate methods for tracking change in incidence for each country, and 4] Three case studies overall where the impact of an intervention to prevent a specific problem is assessed through temporal changes in surveillance data. At first an inventory was made of the experience with the topics above, already executed research, available capacities and expertise of the participating centres concerning the topics and the possibilities for further funding of research. The aim is to come up with several publications, both of pre-COST activities and COST-activities, most likely publications in peer-reviewed journals. Also discussed were possibilities for short term scientific missions and dissemination of results through consensus documents, conferences and Q&A tools in close collaboration with WG4.

**WG3: New techniques for tracing newly occurring occupational diseases.** The objective of WG3 (“tracing new risks”) is to coordinate new techniques & procedures for tracing newly occurring occupational diseases (such as data mining, sentinel approach etc.) (Vincent Bonneterre). The WG3 discussed 1] The development of a sentinel (clinical) watch system

was discussed, open to all Action members to share confidential information on cases of possible new occurring occupational diseases. The ultimate purpose is to validate these cases through discussion and research and publish the information in due time. 2] Systematic analysis of surveillance schemes' databases without any prior hypothesis, for generation of hypotheses. The discussions concentrated on which potential databases and datamining methods are available in the participating countries. One of the important topics discussed was the homogenization of the codes for diseases and exposure in the databases.

WG4: **dissemination** and implementation of new knowledge on occupational diseases (Claudio Colosio): The WG discussed 1] Development of an Action website taking into account the outcomes of the survey on requirements among the MC members. This website will be developed before the next meeting and will be partly open, partly closed (collaboration facilities among Action members). 2] Conducting experiments with (new) internet techniques. After a broad discussion, the group agreed to use the network "LinkedIn" (much more professional and usable for Modernet purposes) and create in this network a Modernet group. 3] Development of information and education material. It is evident that the Consortium Members own a significant amount of training and educational materials. It will be prepared an inventory of the available materials. In a second phase, it will be evaluated the priorities for publication in the website, taking in due account the copyright issues. 4] Conducting experiments with (new) internet techniques such as social media for dissemination of research results on local, national and European level. The WG members agreed that nobody in the group was expert on the issue. The decision was to invite in the next meeting some experts, selected by the Consortium Members FIOH and QOOLife. 5] Development of implementation scenarios of preventive measures on several societal levels", two options have been identified: 1. dissemination of examples of best practice and possible solutions, 2. Disseminating information regarding "signals" of new or emerging risks and diseases. The need of avoiding the risk of creating worries and unjustified alarm has to be taken into account. The need of defining a specific protocol considering the need of evaluating and filtering the information before dissemination has been pointed out.