

ETPGAH & DISCONTTOOLS NEWSLETTER

April 26th, 2010

ETPGAH & DISCONTTOOLS Welcomes new Board members : In order to bring greater synergy to our activities, the Board welcomed nominees from EMIDA, EPIZONE & MedVetNet on to the Boards of both the ETPGAH & DISCONTTOOLS. This facilitates greater collaboration across closely related initiatives.

Progress on Action Plan Implementation: At the Stakeholder meeting in July, 2009, the range of activities arising from the Action Plan were documented – it is an impressive list! DISCONTTOOLS, EMIDA & ICONZ are amongst many other research initiatives that have been launched. The results from the DISCONTTOOLS project will provide direction for the focus of future research as it works through its prioritisation work including gap analysis.

EMIDA Progress: It is tremendous to witness the progress of EMIDA. Databases concerning research infrastructure, capacity, recent along with ongoing research have been established. This represents a really valuable resource & fulfils various parts of the Action Plan. It is particularly impressive to witness cross border collaboration in research including public private partnerships. This is ground breaking work and is to be applauded.

Terms of Reference & Action Plan of the ETPGAH: In order to bring the focus of the ETPGAH up to date, the Terms of Reference are being updated – more information will follow. In addition, the ETPGAH will review its Action Plan in 2010. Much has been achieved and it is now time to take stock, bring the Plan up to date and focus on the actions that need to be completed. In addition, it is an opportunity to consider what other activities might need to be addressed.

Regulatory Review: Part of the Action Plan addressed the need to look at the regulatory framework. The review of the veterinary Directive is advancing. An Impact Assessment is ongoing. Subject to the outcome, it is anticipated that the Commission will propose a revision of the legislation possibly in early 2011. The Co-Decision process will follow taking us up to late 2013 or early 2014. The regulatory ideas in the Action Plan will be pursued as the process unfolds – but one has to have patience – such is democracy!

DISCONTTOOLS Prioritisation & Gap Analysis: Following meetings of Work Packages 2 & 3, the methodology to gather information that would identify gaps & assist scoring was agreed. In addition, the scoring model was also agreed. We are now entering the phase where we can test the model with real data and adjust as necessary based on experience.

All of the information will be placed on the DISCONTTOOLS public website subject to approval by the Work Packages and Project Management Board. We anticipate that we will



be in a position to begin loading the information in the next couple of months. This will represent considerable progress in the DISCONTTOOLS journey & will be the first visible fruits of the project.

Expert Groups Making Progress: Following the work of the ETPGAH, 50 diseases are being considered in the scope of DISCONTTOOLS. We greatly appreciate the volunteers who have generously offered to act as Expert Group leaders with 1 Group per disease. The Expert Groups normally consist of 5 to 10 people representing a network of over 350 people who have generously offered to assist DISCONTTOOLS in its work. We owe a big thank you to each and every one involved.

The work of the Group is to review the information that we provided in the Disease & Product Analysis sheet, identify & rank gaps along with proposing scores for the prioritisation model. This represents a tremendous amount of background work that has been completed in the past year. As stated, the fruits of this work are now appearing. 6 Groups have completed their work. 4 will finish in the coming weeks and numerous Groups will finish by the end of September. By then, we may have 40% of the diseases analysed with the majority being completed by the end of 2010. The mountain appeared high at the outset but we are getting there!

DISCONTTOOLS Website: Please visit the site at www.discontools.eu It already contains a considerable amount of information & will host our detailed database with information on each disease and the scores based on the input from the Expert Groups. It will be then possible to explore, compare and contrast this data in a myriad of ways. It will also build links to the very important databases built by the EMIDA. This will allow one to explore what work has been done on a particular disease, what work is ongoing and where expertise in relation to a particular disease is based.

Technology Evaluation Progress: Work Package 4 dealing with Technology Evaluation held a Workshop in December, 2009. This represented a milestone in this work. We learned that the model that we had been developing was on track & that no magic formula exists in other industries! We had presentations on nanotechnology, mobile phones, diagnostics, machinery, mobile payment systems and a programme operating in New Zealand. The latter programme was of considerable interest representing a well developed methodology to search for new technologies. We are taking the information received from the Workshop on board and are now developing our own model in more detail. More information will follow on what is a very innovative part of the DISCONTTOOLS work.

I trust you find this update of value & your comments & feedback would be welcome.

Declan O' Brien, Chairman, ETPGAH, Project Coordinator, DISCONTTOOLS