

## GSK - Chair of Infectious Diseases

A joint Scientific and Medico-pharmaceutical Activity at the KU-Leuven and the UCL

with the support of Glaxo-SmithKline

- approved by the KU-Leuven (Partnership & Academic Development) and the UCL (Fondation Louvain): July 22, 2002
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Note: UK-English spelling has been used throughout this document

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## ***Why and "basic" How...***

Infectious diseases have long been one of the main causes of mortality among human and animal populations. Improvements in nutrition and hygiene, vaccinations and the introduction of antibiotics have led to the belief that that these diseases were no longer a significant threat. We know, today, that this optimistic view is very wrong. A large number of infectious agents still escape efficient therapy or the available means of prevention (viral and parasitic diseases, e.g.). We also are confronted with the rapidly increasing resistance of organisms that were considered as "vanquished" to our present chemotherapeutic agents.

It is therefore essential not only to maintain but also to further develop the science of infectious diseases and chemotherapy, not only as such, but also as an essential tool for an appropriate use of our present and future anti-infective agents.

A series of initiatives have been launched in this context both at the KU-Leuven and at the UCL, such as the "Maandelijkse Vergaderingen" and the "Séminaire de Pathologie Infectieuse". It appears useful to try to strengthen these efforts by federating them under a form that may allow for an improved impact not only in each of the corresponding Institutions but also at the level of the entire medico-pharmaceutical community in Belgium. This is all the more important as Belgium has now decided, at the federal level, to improve its use of anti-infective agents through co-ordinated programmes. It is the duty of the Universities, and of their Faculties of Medicine and Pharmacy in particular, to participate to these efforts by developing the basic science and the clinical applications that support it. Indeed only sound science can lead to effective actions at the national and community levels. The KU-Leuven and the UCL, which together are responsible for the education and training of about half of the Belgian medico-pharmaceutical community, have therefore a direct role to play in this context.

Early 2002, an informal contact was established between between Prof. J. Van Eldere (KU-Leuven) and Profs M. Delmée and P.M. Tulkens at the occasion of a seminar given at the "Séminaire de Pathologie Infectieuse" of the UCL by Prof. Van Eldere. An exchange of ideas followed resulting in a first proposal for collaboration for common activities. In parallel, Glaxo-SmithKline (GSK) was approached as a potential sponsor. All these exchanges led to the presentation of the concept of a **Chair of Infectious Diseases** to be established jointly by the two universities starting in 2003. This concept was presented at the authorities of both

universities (Prof. G. Mannaerts, vice-rector for Biomedical Sciences, for the KU-Leuven; Prof. J.F. Deneff (Prorector for the Medical Sciences) and Prof. D. Moulin, Dean, for the UCL).

The present document summarises the state of affairs and explains the proposals made concerning this Chair for further discussion, approval, and action at the level of each University and GSK.

### ***The general project ...***

We wish to create a **Chair of Infectious Diseases and Chemotherapy** in close collaboration with two Universities (KU-Leuven & UCL). This Chair will be oriented towards the post-graduate training of physicians, pharmacists, and in general all professionals interested in Infectious Diseases and Anti-infective chemotherapy.

The Chair will be established in close co-operation and with the active participation of

- the Faculties of Medicine of both universities;
- the Faculty of Pharmacy at the KU-Leuven and the School of Pharmacy at the UCL;
- the University Hospitals (U.Z. Gashuisberg for the KU-Leuven; Cliniques universitaires St-Luc et Cliniques universitaires de l'UCL à Mont-Godinne for the UCL);
- specialised Research Institutes (such as the Rega Instituut at the KU-Leuven).

The activities of the Chair will consist in

- public plenary lectures by internationally-recognised experts
- seminars, ward rounds and other training activities by these experts for the members of both universities
- helping to organise short scientific stays for the members of both universities to the universities and clinical centres of the experts

The **Chair of Infectious Diseases and Chemotherapy** could form the nucleus of a future "Centre of Excellence" in the Science of Infectious Diseases and Chemotherapy (medical and pharmaceutical applications) at the KU-Leuven and the UCL.

## ***What shall we do ?***

The Chair will cover the following complementary orientations:

- **Linking fundamental and clinical research**

Research aimed at a better understanding of the critical interactions between a pathogen and its human host offers often long-term but certainly vital contributions in the continuing battle against infectious diseases. The fundamental research implied here is not limited to research on bacteria, viruses and other micro-organisms but also includes research aimed at a better understanding of the human response to these agents. The aim of this chair in inviting experts in the field of fundamental research is to bridge the gap between fundamental research and its medical implications. The task of the experts invited is not only to debate the latest developments in their field of interest but also to illustrate the link of this research to the management of infectious diseases in general.

- **Linking Microbiology and Pharmacology to Clinical medicine:**

Clinical medicine includes the study of new diagnostic and therapeutic approaches. It is a very wide area of expertise that includes not only the direct comparison in animals or patients of different management strategies, but also the impact of new strategies on a higher level (hospital management, hospital hygiene, vaccination programmes, measures aimed at controlling antibiotic consumption, etc...). The task of the invited expert would be, in addition to providing an overview of the state of the art in his field, to try and define the current thinking and dogmas and illustrate how these might be challenged or replaced by others.

- **Developing and Improving the pharmacotherapeutic approaches**

While the properties and indications of antiinfective agents are usually well defined and established through the registration procedures, it has become increasingly evident that their correct use in daily clinical practice implies permanent efforts for "real value" assessment based, partly but not exclusively on evidence-based medicine, knowledge of local epidemiology, and comparative evaluations. The aim here is to define the best algorithms for treatment in a specific environment. The experts will be invited to share

their knowledge and experience in these areas with the interested groups at the two universities and to discuss the applicability of their approaches in Belgium.

- **Linking Hospital and Primary Care**

One of the challenges in Infectious Diseases is that the pathogens spread from the community to the hospital and vice-versa, and this on an increasing fashion in view of the sophistication of the primary care approaches, the necessity to limit the length of hospital stays, and the development of nursing homes-based therapies. One of our future challenges will therefore to develop the tools for diagnostic and treatment that will enable the general practitioner to work "hand in hand" with the hospital-based specialist. The experts here will be asked to analyse and discuss how their approaches may be extended to community-based medicine or how therapy in the community must be developed to complement hospital-based approaches while keeping in mind with the necessary limitations in this area and an optimised and more responsible use of antiinfectives.

## ***How will the Chair operate ?***

Each year the **Scientific Committee** will choose a central theme and selects experts in function of this central theme. Based on this first selection, **4 internationally recognised experts** will be invited to be the **Temporary Holders** (titulaire invité / uitgenodigd titularis) of the Chair each year.

Equilibrium between fundamental research, clinical medicine and pharmaceutical sciences will be sought after but it is not an absolute rule that all these different fields must be represented each year.

The Temporary Holders will be invited to and are expected to agree to do the following:

- To deliver one "State of the Art" plenary lecture in their field of expertise

The aim of this lecture will be to introduce and develop the chosen topic for a public of people that are interested in infection but not necessarily experts in the chosen topic. Emphasis will be on developments, new understandings and future possibilities that could affect the future management of infections.

This lecture will be organised in one of the two universities (with due alternance for the 4 lectures scheduled each year) and will be public. It will be broadly announced to attract not only people from our own universities but also from outside. Each university will in turn be host for this lecture.

- To animate two or more interactive sessions for a total duration of one day.

These sessions can take various formats such as an interactive seminar, a workshop, an informal debate, a ward rounds, or simply laboratory discussions. The most appropriate format will be discussed and planned with the holders of the chair. In these sessions, specific aspects in the expert's chosen field will be developed in more detail before a limited audience of invited and interested participants, mainly but not exclusively from our two universities. A special effort will be made to involve all members active in these particular fields in our two institutions in order also to strengthen ties between our two universities and between our universities and the visiting experts. These interactive

sessions can for each holder of the chair be organised in both universities or in only one university, depending on the expected public and on the availability of the corresponding facilities. Equilibrium between the universities will be aimed for but no strict rules are set.

- To allow young doctors and pharmacists, who have a demonstrated interest for Infectious Diseases and Chemotherapy, to get into direct contact with their own group through
  - specific "information-gaining" programmes" <sup>1</sup> (short stays and scientific visits ; 6 per year);
  - more in depth "training programmes" <sup>2</sup> (one or two weeks, with active participation to the local activities; 3 per year)
  - exchange programmes between the institutions of the experts and members of the KU-Leuven and the UCL (i.e. sending our experts abroad) to improve the reputation and expertise our own groups and reach a "peer to peer" relationship with the Institution of the expert.

In a nutshell, the **Chair of Infectious Diseases and Chemotherapy** could allow to create within our Institutions a "dynamic state" to ensure the successful development of a permanent activity in Infectious Diseases and Chemotherapy. This activity will have strong implication of all persons active in these areas as well as on young, in-training persons who will be the future actors in these areas.

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<sup>1</sup> an "**information-gaining programme**" is a short visit (typically one half-a-day) in one or several centres in order to learn and understand how things are organised and to bring back the necessary information to start thinking about launching similar programmes at the KU-Leuven and/or the UCL.

<sup>2</sup> a "**training programme**" implies a direct participation in the activities of the foreign centre in order to gain not only theoretical but also practical information that may allow to launch the corresponding activities at the KU-Leuven and/or UCL. A personal investment of the trainee is essential.



## ***Finances...***

The annual financial needs are estimated to be 42,000 euros (about 1,700,000 BEF). This would allow us to cover:

- 4 invitations to the Temporary Holders (key external experts; average cost : 4,000 euros per invitation)
- 8 "information-gaining trips" (1,000 euros per trip)
- 4 "training trips" (4,000 euros per trip)
- organisation costs (2,000 euros/year)

The corresponding budget has already been awarded by GSK for an initial period of 1 year, starting in January 2003. It is the intention of GSK to extend its support for a longer period but on a yearly basis.

The budget will be awarded by GSK through the ad-hoc Fund-raising structures of the two universities ("Partnership & Academic Development" for the KU-Leuven; "*Fondation Louvain*" for the UCL). These two structures will then organise among themselves and in collaboration with the members of the **Bureau** the distribution of the funds according to the necessities. In principle, an equal distribution between the two universities will be sought.

GSK will have its name associated with the Chair. Representatives of the GSK will be officially invited to each activity of the Chair as well as the general activities organised for sponsors of Chairs by the ad-hoc structures at each of the two universities.

## **Organisation**

The project would be placed under the direction of

- the **Permanent Holders** (titulaires nommés / benoemde personen) of the Chair (one for each university) who will act jointly and will be directly responsible for daily activity of the Chair, as defined by the Bureau, and will report to the universities and to Glaxo-SmithKline;
- a **Bureau**, which will be responsible for defining the overall policy and setting up the general organisation. The Bureau will meet informally when needed and formally at least once a year. The Bureau is responsible for the financial organisation of the activities of the Chair and has authority for allocation of the funds;
- a **Scientific Committee**, which will meet once a year for providing the basic information and suggesting the general orientations for the activities of the next year, selection of the speakers and in general assisting the Bureau for an optimal organisation of the Chair.
- a **secretarial office** which will be organised according to the needs and possibilities of each university and/or Glaxo-SmithKline, but with due consideration and attention for excellence in communication towards each university and the general medical public in Belgium, as well as for efficient local organisation.

The following persons will be invited to take part to the above-described organisation:

- **Permanent holders:**
  - J. Van Eldere (Microbiology, KU-Leuven)
  - P.M. Tulkens (Pharmacology, UCL)
- **Bureau**
  - M. Delmée (Microbiology, UCL)
  - G. Mannaerts (Pharmacology, KU-Leuven)
  - E. Van Brackel (GSK-Belgium)
  - and the permanent holders of the Chair
- **Scientific Committee**
  - **Microbiology:** J. Verhaegen and E. De Clercq (KU-Leuven), and Y. Gluczynski and P. Goubau (UCL)
  - **Immunology:** G. Opendakker (KU-Leuven)
  - **General Internal Medicine / Infectious Diseases:** W. Peetermans, and E. Van Wijngaerden (KU-Leuven), and M. Lambert, F. Zech, and B. Vandercam (UCL)

- **Internal Medicine / Haematology:** M. Boogaerts (KU-Leuven), and A. Ferrant (UCL)
- **Internal Medicine / Pneumology:** M. Demedts (KU-Leuven), and L. Delaunois, Y. Sibille (UCL)
- **Intensive Care:** C. Verwaest (KU-Leuven) and P.F. Laterre and A. Dive (UCL)
- **Paediatrics:** C. De Boeck (KU-Leuven) and E. Sokal (UCL)
- **General Practice:** D. Pestiaux (UCL)
- **Hospital Hygiene:** A. Schuermans (KU-Leuven) and A. Simon (UCL)
- **Hospital Pharmacy and Clinical Pharmacy:** L. Wilmotte (UCL)
- **Pharmacology:** M. Casteels (KU-Leuven) and F. Van Bambeke (UCL)
- **Representative of Glaxo-SmithKline:** E. Ghins

The Deans of the Faculties of Medicine (J. Janssens [KU-Leuven], J.J. Rombouts [UCL], the Dean of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Science (P. Declerck [KU-Leuven]), and the President of the School of Pharmacy (D. Lambert [UCL]) will also be invited "ex-officio".

- **Secretarial office:** M. Breugelmans (UCL) and F. Van Hoof (KUL)

### ***Language***

The official language of the Chair will be English, but all activities specifically oriented towards the members of each university will be also announced and made available in Dutch and French as deemed necessary, and technically and financially feasible.