



BSAC

british society for antimicrobial chemotherapy

Standardized Method Development Centre

For a number of years, the members of the BSAC Working Party on Susceptibility Testing recognised a demand for a standardized method of disc diffusion testing that would provide an alternative to the various existing techniques employed throughout the UK and Ireland. This new method would be tied in with BSAC MIC breakpoints and would provide interpretative criteria for clinically significant bacteria. The methodology would stand up to internal quality control systems and external quality assurance programmes and would be suitable for use in surveillance studies.

In 1997, the Working Party began development of the Standardized Method devising criteria for media selection, inoculum density, antibiotic disc contents and incubation conditions. The resulting methodology was subsequently field tested in 19 centres throughout the UK and Ireland and when found to be robust, was published in the 1998 Summer Newsletter as a viable alternative to existing methodologies. This was followed by a series of road shows in the winter of that year, designed to familiarise participants with the methodology and provide assistance and advice on the implementation of the technique into routine diagnostic laboratories.

As a direct result of the interest shown in the new methodology, the Working Party on Susceptibility Testing established a need for a centre which would further support and develop the BSAC method. The Standardized Method Development Centre (SMDC) was set up within the Department of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy at City Hospital, Birmingham in December 1999 under the leadership of Professor Richard Wise and Jenny Andrews. The objectives of the Centre are as follows:

- To further develop the BSAC Disc Susceptibility Testing Method including guidelines for new antimicrobial/organism combinations
- To provide support and advice to users, potential users and manufacturers
- To provide the latest updates in methodology for the BSAC website
- To organise bi-annual User Group Days and 'hands on' practical workshops
- To carry out practical investigations arising from user problems

If you have any queries regarding the BSAC Methodology or would like to assist the SMDC in the development of the Standardized Method, please contact Jenny Andrews or Becky Walker:

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For details of forthcoming events relating to the Standardized Method please refer to Residential Workshops/ User Group Days section in the susceptibility testing section of the website.