



Summary of the Third Annual Fall National Molecular Microbiology

Diagnostics Users Group (NMG)

October 19-20, 2009

Hamilton, ON

Background: The National Molecular Microbiology Diagnostics Users Group (NMG) is a newly established working group that includes approximately 100 laboratorians using molecular methods for clinical microbiology diagnostics. Members are from hospital, private and public health laboratories from across Canada.

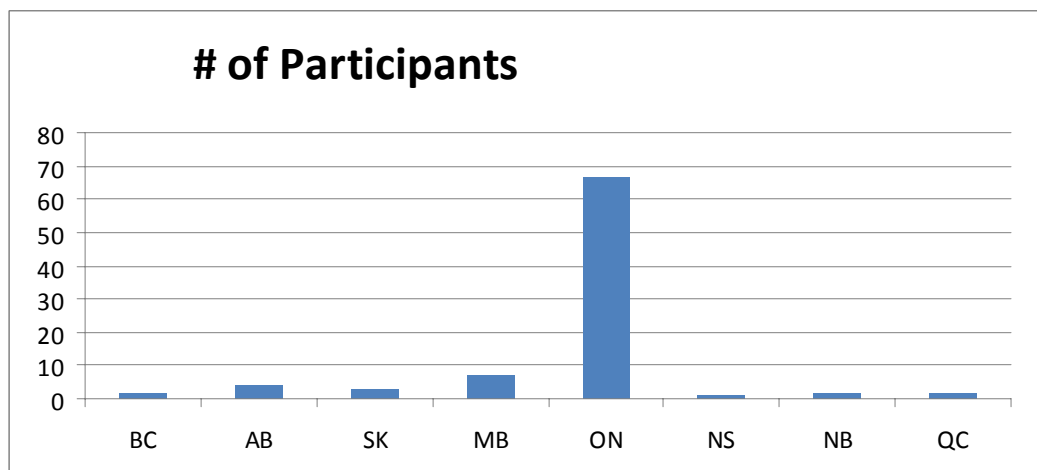
The group was formed in March 2006 at the Annual AMMI Canada – CACMID Meeting with the following goals:

- Develop an integrated national network of clinical microbiology laboratory experts to support molecular diagnostics by collaboration and communication through discussion groups and an annual fall meeting.
- Make recommendations, set guidelines and develop proficiency and policy regarding molecular microbiology testing.
- Develop processes for sharing methods, specimens, data and information.

Annual Fall Meetings have been planned to discuss proficiency activities from throughout the year, current molecular testing issues, and to obtain updates on new technologies, assays, trouble-shooting and instrumentations through industry sponsored workshops.

Registrants: A total of 88 participants from across Canada registered for the NMG. The graph below indicates the breakdown of the province individuals were from (Figure 1). Ontario participants included those from Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa, Burlington, Etobicoke, Brantford, Kitchener, London, and Brampton.

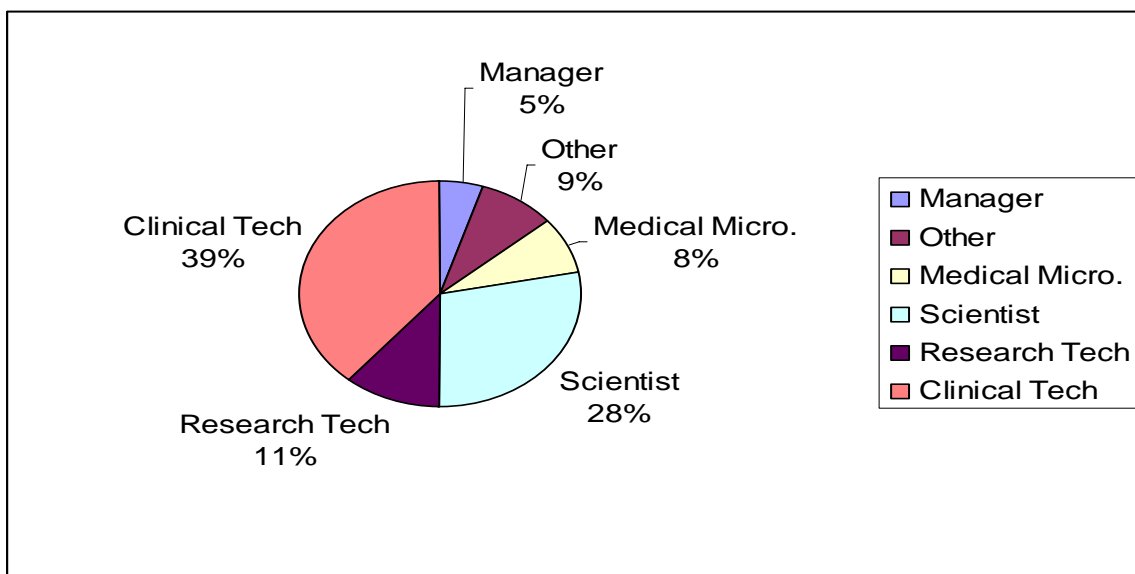
Figure 1. Number of Participants at the NMG from each Province.





The participants who attended came from various aspects of the clinical microbiology laboratory. The breakdown for the participants based on their job title is shown in figure 2. The largest group attending the conference were clinical technologists, including MLTs, Senior Technologists and Technical specialists. An almost equal number of Clinical scientists (PhDs) and research technologists/technicians followed. There were also medical microbiologists and laboratory managers present.

Figure 2. Breakdown of participants by job title.



Industry Participation:

Seventeen companies contributed to the conference as exhibitors (13), workshop presentations (7), and/or sponsors (6) for meals, coffee breaks and an evening dinner and social event on Monday evening. Two companies sent individuals to view the presentations. Topics for the one hour workshops ranged from updates on new technologies, trouble-shooting, strategies on how to develop molecular assays, review of infectious diseases and detection and quantitation of viruses in transplant patients.

Exhibitor tables were placed in the lobby where coffee breaks and meals were held. This allowed numerous opportunities for interaction between participants and industry. Industry participants were free to attend all workshops and presentations held the first day and the morning of the second day.

Sponsorship was indicated with signage at the event (beside the meals and at the registration desk) and with a handout inserted into the registration package of all participants. Money from workshops, sponsorship and exhibition was used to offset costs of the meeting and to supply travel grants to 19 participants travelling from out of province, who would otherwise have not been able to attend.



Figure 3. Participation of companies as Exhibitors, Workshops, and/or Sponsorship

Sponsorship	Workshop	Exhibitor
CACMID	Primera Dx	Primera Dx
Roche Diagnostics	Inverness Medical Canada	Zeptomatrix
Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics	Zeptomatrix	Qiagen Inc.
Qiagen Inc.	Gen-Probe	bioMérieux Canada Inc.
Abbott Molecular	Qiagen Inc.	Inverness Medical Canada
Fisher Scientific/Abgene/GE Healthcare	astra Diagnostics Canada	Inter Medico
	Inter Medico	Gen-Probe
		Abbott Molecular
		Becton Dickinson
		Daan Diagnostics
		Cedarlane Laboratories
		Somagen Diagnostics
		Fisher Scientific/ Abgene/ GE Healthcare

Travel Grants:

Travel grants were made available to participants travelling out of province. Participants applied for travel grants prior to the meeting. Nineteen were approved to cover costs of flight and accommodation. The desire is that we will be able to generate enough income next year to hand out increased number of travel grants.

Working Group Sessions:

Following a brief update from the chairs of the working groups (John Kim and Karam Ramotar), the participants were divided into two groups based on interest in the working group topics

1. Controls (internal, extraction, etc.). When, what and how many do you need?
2. Verification, validation and on-going quality management for quantitative assays.

The groups worked on their topics for 1 and a half hours followed by a 15 minute presentation and group discussion.



Conference Evaluation:

Results from a conference evaluation indicated that the majority of participants were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the meeting, as well as would attend upcoming conferences in future years. The facilities of the conference (theatre and lobby at SJH) and location (Hamilton, ON) were approved by the majority of participants as the continuing site for the annual conference.

Some minor issues identified included:

- first day too long
- half an hour for some topics was long enough and would leave more time for discussion
- one day was not enough to meet with all the exhibitors
- the space was a little tight for exhibits and coffee breaks

The above issues were discussed at the core group meeting following the conference and will be addressed in next years' conference to be held **October 18-19, 2010 in Hamilton, ON.**