The 22nd Annual North American CF Conference in Orlando, Florida, October 23, 2008 – Diagnostics Working Group Meeting

The meeting was initiated by Dr Inez Bronsveld who showed the statistical analyses of the results in nasal potential difference measurements (NPD) collected from the various CF centres in Europe. There are a few centres that have non-comparable results, however a cluster of centres have quite similar results. One of the important considerations is that the confidence intervals within the individual centres are relatively large, which should also be addressed in our process. We like to attack this problem by good training of personnel, limitation of operators, and even more standardisation of the operating procedures. The important goal now, is to identify important differences from less important items to standardise, in order to get consistent results but also avoid unnecessary changes in procedures.

We were pleased to have our guest speaker Dr Steven Rowe, who is working at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He is part of the CFF-TDN and aids in the standardisation process of the NPD measurement in the US. He showed us the proceedings in the US standardisation process: he pointed out the items that the CFF-TDN thinks should be standardised. By the collaboration between the ECFS and the CFF-TDN we hope to achieve a consensus on one standard operating procedure. This is important to pool and compare results and use NPD as an outcome parameter in multi-centre studies.

Dr Isabelle Sermet from Paris, France, presented a commercially made exploring catheter suitable for nasal PD measurements. It is a double lumen catheter with the hole either on the side or on the tip. The exploring catheter is one of the items we are discussing in the standardisation process.

Dr Kris De Boeck from Leuven, Belgium, gave some preliminary results on the comparison she is performing between the “Alton method” for NPD and the “Knowles method”. The main difference between these two is that the first one is measuring on the nasal floor and the second one is measuring under the inferior turbinate. We are very anxious to see the final results, because the anatomic site of measuring might be one of the items that we will have to standardise in our process towards one standard operating procedure.