

# NEWS

## SICA-HF

Studies Investigating  
Co-morbidities Aggravating  
Heart Failure



# SICA-HF

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## General

During the last meeting in Rome the consortium of SICA-HF decided to initiate a regular newsletter. This should inform especially about the dissemination activities and the subject recruitment from the last months. The newsletter will be sent to all partners every 3 months. Everyone interested in the topics of SICA-HF is welcome to subscribe to receiving the quarterly newsletter at

[www.sica-hf.com/en/newsletter.php](http://www.sica-hf.com/en/newsletter.php).

## Dissemination

All publications related to SICA-HF are listed on the website:

[www.sica-hf.com/en/dissemination.php](http://www.sica-hf.com/en/dissemination.php).

## Meetings

The 3rd Project Governing Board Meeting has taken place in Rome between 9 and 10 October 2011. A representative from each involved partner has attended the meeting. All relevant topics and practical issues were discussed, and the meeting was deemed very successful. Next steps and actions items for the upcoming years were defined. The next partner meeting will take place in Moscow in September / October 2012.



## SICA-HF Workshop on muscle biopsies at the Charite, Berlin

The workshop on muscle and fat biopsy methodology was held at the Charité, Campus Virchow Klinikum in Berlin, from 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> November 2011. It was planned and scheduled following the discussions at this year's annual SICA-HF PGB Meeting in Rome in October. The aim was to coordinate the international project partners on methodology and processing on muscle and fat tissue specimen. Studies on tissue biopsies are central aspects in a number of work packages within the SICA-HF Consortium (WP07, WP08, WP09, WP10, WP12, WP13). Teaching and coordination of common standardized operational procedures across all centers contributing to biopsy studies is therefore a crucial task for the consortium to ensure adequate applicability of methods on an international level.



Participants from all centers involved attended the workshop including Hull, UK; Moscow (MSU and CRC), St Petersburg, both RUSSIA; Rome, Italy; Zabrze, Poland, Golnik, Slovenia, and from Hannover, Germany. Experienced senior researchers held presentations of muscle (Dr. Sandek, Dr. Krause) and fat biopsy (Dr. Engeli) handling.

Teaching and practical sessions on biopsy procedures of both, muscle and fat tissue were performed. Hands on lessons were held to provide individual experience in the methodology. Immediate post procedural tissue processing was discussed and explained in line with the requirements from analysing centers to ensure comparability of tissue quality being collected in all centers.

Great support was received from a number of patients who volunteered to be studied during the workshop. Excellent organisation of the administrative aspect as of scientific program was thanks to Ms. Ebner and Dr. Sandek, who ensured the success of the workshop.

Beside project-focussed and technical discussions, a great deal of personal communication between researchers from all centers was achieved during the 2 days. The workshop was therefore a further step forward to foster fruitful relations between the international scientific partners within the SICA-HF FP7 project.

Wolfram Doehner

## Distinguished researcher of the SICA-HF consortium



Since 2003 Dr. Anja Sandek is working at the group „Applied Cachexia Research“ at the Department of Cardiology, Charité, Berlin. She has completed her training in internal medicine while combining daily clinics with scientific projects

regarding heart failure as a multisystem disease. Dr. Sandek’s research focus is on alterations of the intestinal barrier and their contribution to the chronic inflammatory nature of heart failure. Here she documented an increased intestinal passive permeability and a reduced specific absorption function of the intestinal mucosa.

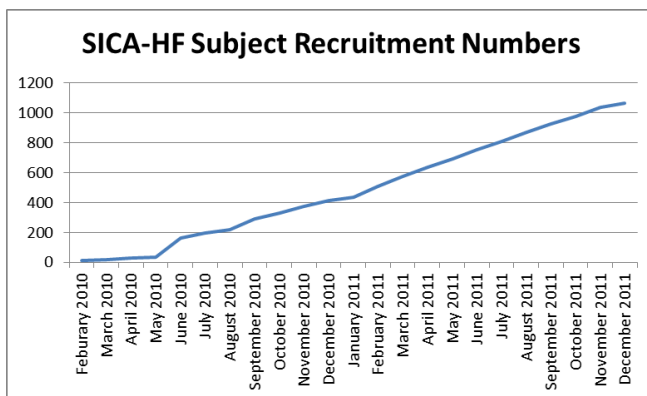
Furthermore, analysis of intestinal bacteria revealed an augmented intestinal bacterial biofilm in patients with chronic heart failure.

The SICA project that investigates comorbidities in heart failure and started patient recruitment in the Berlin center at the beginning of 2010, She regards the SICA-HF project that investigates comorbidities of heart failure as an excellent opportunity for further characterisation of the different facets of systemic alterations in the course of heart failure. She supports this by examining, consulting and attending patients with different degrees of heart failure.

## Subject Recruitment

The subject recruitment is proceeding very well within our project SICA-HF. We have already reached the 1,000 line of subjects.

As also our partner in Golnik, Slovenia has finally received the ethics approval in September we are confident that the recruitment numbers will further increase within the next months. Our new partner in Zabrze, Poland is also planning to start with the patient recruitment in January.



Cohort	Recruitment numbers
1 Healthy Control	131
2 Heart Failure	311
3 Diabetes Control	55
4 Heart Failure and Comorbidities	568
<b>Total</b>	<b>1065</b>