

# WELCOME LETTER



*Dear Participants,*

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference on *Legionella* in Rome, Italy, from the 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2017.

This year we will celebrate forty years since *Legionella pneumophila* was identified, after the first outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in Philadelphia in 1976.



Since then, we have learnt a lot about these bacteria, we have improved our capability to conduct appropriate epidemiological investigations, and thanks to geographical information analysis and typing methods, we are now able to better identify the source of infection.

We also have recognised the importance of appropriate risk assessment on water systems in order to rapidly apply the best control measures and adopt different disinfection procedures, being aware that there is not a single recipe. In fact, every situation must be thoroughly studied and every intervention must be tailored.

Knowledge on ecological niches of *Legionella* has been expanded. Moreover, the recent DNA sequencing technologies to monitor microbial population in water systems appear to be quite promising for a better understanding of behaviours devised by this intriguing bacterium to survive in the environment.

Regarding diagnostic methods, the introduction of urinary antigen detection has given a boost in detecting cases, but the development and validation of other fast and accurate molecular methods are needed.

The number of identified species is increasing day by day, and in addition to traditional procedures, integrated multi “omics” technologies help to clarify the molecular basis of pathogenesis and evolution of most of these species. However, a better understanding of the interaction between the bacterium and the host, with special reference to the population at risk, would be desirable.

We consider this International Conference a great opportunity to define state of the art about all the aspects concerning *Legionella*, and we do hope that new ideas for future researches and collaborative studies in this field will arise.

We warmly welcome you to Rome, the “Eternal” city. Here, the ancient Romans laid the foundations of their empire, leaving spectacular signs in culture, architecture, city planning, politics and laws, which survived to present day, leaving people coming from all over the world astonished.

The Local Organising Committee is willing to offer you the best hospitality in terms of location, accommodation and, last but not least, good food and the opportunity to choose among a number of guided trips in Rome and surroundings for you and your accompanying persons.

On behalf of the Conference organisers we sincerely welcome you to the 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference on *Legionella* 2017.

*Paola Borella and Maria Luisa Ricci*  
Chairs, *Legionella* 2017

